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KARS
AND
OUR CAPTIVITY IN RUSSIA.

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“ The feign’d retreat,—the nightly ambuscade,
The daily harass, and the fight delay’d,—
The long privation of the hoped supply,—
The tentless rest beneath the humid sky ;

* * * * *

Of these they had not deem’d, the battle day
They could encounter as a veteran may ;
But more prefer the fury of the strife,
And present death, to hourly suffering life :
And famine wrings and fever sweeps away,
Their numbers melting fast from their array.”

BYRON (*Lara*).

“ Sive venturus per inhospitalem
Caucasum.”—HORACE.





J. Brown, sc.

GENERAL SIR W.F. WILLIAMS, BART.
OF KARS, K.C.B.

FROM A CALOTYPE BY J. WATKINS.

London: Richard Bentley 1855

K A R S

2
AND

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OUR CAPTIVITY IN RUSSIA:

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WITH LETTERS FROM

GEN. SIR W. F. WILLIAMS, BART., OF KARS, K.C.B.;

MAJOR TEESDALE, C.B.;

AND

THE LATE CAPTAIN THOMPSON, C.B.

BY

COLONEL ATWELL LAKE, C.B.

ONE OF HER MAJESTY'S AIDES-DE-CAMP.

SECOND EDITION.



LONDON :

RICHARD BENTLEY,

Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

MDCCCLVI.

[The Author and Publisher reserve the right of Translation of this Work.]

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Memories
Military

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München

TO
HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY
THE QUEEN,

WHO HAS ENHANCED THE HONOURS SHE HAS CONFERRED
BY THE SYMPATHY SHE HAS SHOWN
FOR THOSE WHO HAVE FOUGHT AND SUFFERED
IN THEIR COUNTRY'S CAUSE,

This Book,

RECORDING THE COURAGE AND ENDURANCE OF THE TURKISH SOLDIERY
UNDER GREAT TRIALS,

AS WELL AS THE GENEROUS CONDUCT OF THEIR ENEMY,

IS

BY PERMISSION

DEDICATED

BY

HER MAJESTY'S DEVOTED AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

ATWELL LAKE.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

I WRITE only a few words by way of Preface to a New Edition—it is a pleasant duty to perform, and one that I shall readily repeat whenever the Public may give me an opportunity. The responsibilities of authorship are over:—the dangerous depths and shallows have been passed in comparative safety. My thanks are due to the press for the kind and indulgent manner in which it has treated me; they have, with one single exception, while freely expressing their own opinions, nevertheless treated me with a courtesy which I take this early opportunity of gratefully acknowledging.

In what way the “Heroes of Kars,” as he vouchsafes to call us, have offended the Editor of the *Athenæum* I am at a loss to conjecture. Had he confined his remarks to the mere statement of

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

his opinion, that the Book was stupid and ill-written, I should not have noticed them; but, as he has thought fit to allude to the silence of my comrades and myself regarding General Guyon—thereby insinuating that we were jealous of anyone else sharing the honours and rewards which Government has been pleased to bestow upon us—I will simply state that the career and reputation of that officer were in no way connected with the special subject of my Narrative; for I must be allowed to deny the accuracy of this writer's statement, when alluding to the Fortifications of Kars, that “the place had been prepared to our hands by General Guyon and the Hungarian officers who served with him.” This assertion is quite at variance with the truth, and no one but a person wholly unacquainted with such matters would have ventured to make it. It would have been better if the editor had adhered to his resolution, not to “affect to pronounce on a military point.”*

From the nature and method of the volume, I was

* I may add that a Biography of General Guyon has been already written by Mr. Arthur Kinglake, to which interesting volume I beg to refer any of my readers who may be desirous of learning some of the antecedents of this gallant officer.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

compelled to show, perhaps too prominently, what has been aptly termed "the importance of a man to himself;" but, at the risk of still further incurring the imputation of egotism, I insert a letter which I have lately received from General Mouravieff, and which will tend to meet, in some measure, those "vigorous denials from military men who know the Armenian Frontier," to which the Reviewer alludes.

One more word before I conclude. I observe that one of the Journals, which has done me the honour to notice my Book, complains that no mention is made by me of General Kmety. No one more fully appreciates the services of this brave Hungarian officer during the blockade of Kars than I do. He is mentioned with kindness and affection in the letters both of Major Teesdale and Captain Thompson; and if I did not more particularly allude to him myself in the short and imperfect sketch I have given of the affairs at Kars, it is because I have reserved the account of his services, as well as those of another distinguished Hungarian, General Collmann, for my Professional Memoir, which is now nearly ready for the press. For both these officers I retain a sincere regard,

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

and I esteem them not only for their gallantry in the field, but for their amiable and social qualities in private life. Fault may also be found with me for not prominently noticing the services of several Turkish officers who were conspicuous for their gallant conduct during the attack of the 29th of September ; but this omission will be found supplied in my forthcoming Work.

A. L.

LONDON, *August*, 1856.

PREFACE.



JUST as the following pages are going to press, I write a few hurried lines to make some acknowledgments and explanations which I deem necessary.

After a simple, but I trust intelligible, account of the blockade of Kars, I have introduced the Letters of my lamented friend, the late Captain Thompson. I do not think, that even the sincere affection I entertained for him has caused me to overestimate their merit, when I say, that, apart from the personal interest which all who respect valour will feel in the circumstances of his melancholy death, they give a vivid and real description of our every-day life at Kars. If some repetitions are found in them, the blame must be laid on me, and not on him, for (as in many other works

containing epistolary correspondence) they occur from the fact that the same thought or anecdote is repeated in letters of or about the same date, addressed to different friends. This, however, is the result of design rather than of carelessness on my part. There is, in most of these very repetitions, a variety of expression, or they prove with what emphasis the fact or feeling referred to rested on his mind. His own letters may, by their truthfulness and vivacity, form, as it were, a short biography of one whose memory should ever be cherished as a gallant officer and a warm friend.

To Major-General Sir Fenwick Williams I have to express, on the part of myself, and I hope I may venture to add on that of the public, my thanks for permitting me to insert a few of his letters, written rapidly, in the brief intervals of his incessant labours, to friends at home. In the case of these (as of my own and other letters) I have preferred giving them as they were originally penned, without making such alterations as would perhaps, even if they better pleased the ear of the reader, detract from their value as authentic sources of information.

My grateful acknowledgments are due to Major Teesdale for the letters he has contributed. More of these interesting documents would have been inserted, had not the greater part of them been, I grieve to say, unfortunately mislaid.

To Mr. Churchill, who has kindly assisted me by translating from the original Arabic, the letter of Sheikh Schamyl to General Williams, which, as well as the copy of one from General Mouravieff,* I subjoin, I beg to offer my best thanks.

When a man rushes into print he has scarcely a right to ask indulgence; but there are some reasons which, on this occasion, justify my expecting more than may be usually ceded to an author. The work appears under painful and disadvantageous circumstances. The Diary, which has formed the basis of the narrative portion, was originally intended for no eyes except those of my own family. On my arrival in England I was asked by many friends to address myself at once to the task of preparing it for publication, and, relying on the assistance of my friend Captain Thompson, I commenced the work.

* See page 338.

Alas ! while scarcely on the threshold of my labours, the malady, from which he was suffering on his arrival in England, increased, and suddenly, as many will remember, terminated in his premature and melancholy death.

My first impulse was to abandon the undertaking ; but, finding that I was pledged to the public and my publisher, I continued, at the urgent advice of my friends, the proposed duty, amid many distractions of business and the more pleasing interruptions of public receptions and private hospitality. Such as the book is, I now offer it to the reading world, conscious of many defects in execution.

If I shall have been so fortunate as to impress on the minds of my fellow-countrymen—that the Turkish soldiers, if well officered, are equal to any troops in the world,—and that our late foes, the Russians, are a generous and hospitable people,—I shall have satisfied my own expectations. And if I have been enabled, in doing this, to afford that “useful pleasure ” which consists in combined information and amusement, I shall have succeeded beyond my most sanguine wishes.

Of the events of the blockade I could have given a more detailed account, but am anxious not to forestall the interest of a scientific and professional work on the subject which I composed during my sojourn at Penza, in the hope that it may be useful to my brother officers of Engineers. Moreover, I have laboured under the disadvantage of having been deprived of valuable materials by the unavoidable loss of my journal by Dr. Sandwith in a snowstorm while *en route* from Kars to Batoum. This was a record of our daily doings, containing some anecdotes which have escaped a rather treacherous memory, and which might have enlivened the pages of this volume.

One word more, on a matter of a personal kind. An apology for egotism is itself egotistical, and I shall therefore avail myself of the ingenious defence of it in the preface to that most readable of all books of travel (need I add Eothen?) "It seems to me," writes its author, "that this egotism of a traveller, however incessant, however shameless and obtrusive, must still convey some true idea of the country through which he has passed. His very selfishness, his habit of referring the

whole external world to his own sensations, compels him as it were to observe the laws of perspective; he tells you of objects not as he knows them to be, but as they seemed to him."

A. L.

LONDON,

July 23, 1856.

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OUR CAPTIVITY IN RUSSIA,

ETC.

CHAPTER I.

Object of this chapter—"Story of Kars"—My duty—General Sir Fenwick Williams—Condition of Turkish troops—Fortifications—The army—The Rediff—Vassif Pasha—The Ramazan and feast of Baïram—General Williams' despatch—Desertion—Total defeat of the Russians—Movements of the day—Bravery of the attack—Conduct of Turks—The capitulation—Kmety and Kolman—The Convention—The Russian camp—Captain Thompson.

THE object of the following chapter is rather to introduce a few letters of my own, and more of my lamented friend Captain Thompson, written at Kars, to friends and relatives in England, than to give any lengthened or connected narrative of the events of the blockade of that place by the Russians. I would rather hasten on to record some of the incidents of our travel and captivity, and, without binding myself to any unqualified admiration of

the government and institutions of Russia, nevertheless express my grateful remembrance of much generous treatment, and of many a sincere personal courtesy and kindness.

For reasons, which I have before assigned,* I shall only glance at a few points of interest connected with our strong but ineffectual struggle to hold the important fortress, which has so long justly been considered the key to Asia Minor, in any contest between the Muscovite and the Turk. For beyond the interest which all military men must feel in a more technical and professional account of our style and method of defence,† the public has little to learn which they do not already know of the story of Kars. The large Blue Book containing the official correspondence on the subject, the accounts of newspaper correspondents, the comments on these, and finally the full and able discussions in both Houses of Parliament enshrined in the pages of Hansard, must be the sources from which future historians will draw their narrative of this strange and instructive episode in the war between Russia and the Allies. From these most thinking men will have already gathered their own impressions, and drawn their own conclusions. It would be as offensive and painful to me to write my own eulogy, as it is unnecessary that I should write that of my

* See Preface.

† Ibid.

gallant chief and comrades. Still less is it my intention to fix the blame—which manifestly does rest somewhere—on any of those concerned in it. This reserve arises from no timid reticence, but rather I hope from a sense of duty. However I may disappoint those whose desire is, at all risks, to be strictly logical, I am of opinion that I am but following the course which appears becoming and right if, as a military man, I contribute for professional purposes the intended work to which I have before alluded, and here in my new capacity of author, for which I am conscious of such slender qualifications, simply afford any amusement or instruction that may lie within my power.

A country which has greeted with acclamations the honours bestowed on General Sir W. Fenwick Williams, and welcomed with such hearty and hospitable rejoicings his return to its shores, will believe that no praise of mine, however sincere, can add to the estimation in which his genius must be held wherever the feats of British arms are recorded. It was, indeed, a sagacious appreciation of his special endowments that must have influenced those who selected him for the post of difficulty and danger that he so honourably held. His long experience among the Turks, and his profound insight into their habits and national character peculiarly fitted him for the duties of his office. When appointed

in 1854 a Commissioner to direct the movements of the Ottoman army in Asia Minor, no one knew better than Colonel Williams the arduous nature of the task imposed on him. No one knew better than he did the jarring elements of which the Turkish nation is composed. It was scarcely a novelty to him that he should have to deal with soldiers, whose valour and endurance is such that, if well commanded, they are hardly inferior to any troops in the world,—with officers, who from the very system under which they are appointed and promoted are, with few exceptions, grossly incompetent,—with officials of every grade insolent and corrupt, and with Pashas, whose greed and venality are only equalled by the indolence and apathy, which they mistake for a philosophic resignation to the decrees of destiny. He had to inspire courage and confidence in men who had been in the previous year signally defeated by the Russians in the battle of Kuruk-deri, and who had encountered such disasters, and been so cruelly plundered of their pay by those in command of them, that desertion had become an every-day occurrence, and who were disorganised and demoralised to the last degree. Twenty-four months' pay was due to them, and their uniform was in rags.

Meanwhile that distinguished general, Mouravieff, was assembling his large and well-disciplined army

at Gumri. The first thing which General Williams did was to visit Kars, fully acquaint himself with the state of things there, and leaving his aide-de-camp, Captain Teesdale, to establish what discipline and order he could, to return at once to head-quarters at Erzeroum, from which place he wrote a series of despatches to the embassy at Constantinople, as well as to the Foreign Office. He described the condition of affairs—the arrears of pay—the clothing of the men—and the want of ammunition. How his despatches were received, and his requests neglected, has been again and again adequately discussed.

The Turks, who fight proverbially well on the defensive, and especially behind earthworks, are nevertheless singularly ignorant and unskilful in fortification. The position of Kars is strong and to some extent tenable, but in 1828 they surrendered it to Prince Paskiewitch in three days. In the condition in which we found it, it is questionable whether they could have held it for three hours. I am not going to weary the general reader with a minute and technical account of our operations. Suffice it that with the able assistance of Captain Thompson, who arrived at Erzeroum in February 1855, and proceeded in the following month to Kars, I did all that lay in my power to make the place impregnable. While the General

with the efficient aid of Teesdale was indefatigably toiling at Erzeroum, where by his diplomatic tact and energetic decision he overcame all difficulties, our duties were confined to Kars itself. We had indeed no sinecure. It is so painful to reflect on the obstacles which we encountered in the corruption and bigotry of the Turks in command, that I prefer not dwelling unnecessarily on the subject. Of the several branches of the army the only one in a satisfactory condition was the ARTILLERY. Ibrahim Bey was an officer who thoroughly understood his duties, and was at the same time not too self-opinionated to adopt the suggestions of others.

Anything more lamentably wretched than the state of the CAVALRY cannot be conceived. Their swords were too short, their lances too heavy, their uniform torn and tattered, and their horses old, worn out, and therefore useless, and the men themselves such indifferent horsemen that they could scarcely keep their seats. So little had they been drilled, that they could as easily have written an epic poem as perform an adroit manœuvre; and even on outpost duty it would have been unwise to have placed much reliance on their firmness or strategical skill, if they had not been placed scientifically in position by the eminent Hungarian General Kmety (Ismail Pasha).

In the corps of INFANTRY there existed some strong contrasts. A few regiments were well clothed, and well armed, but the majority were quite guileless of all knowledge of drill and discipline, and the Rediff or Militia were as inefficient and clumsy as the rawest recruits,—a fact which will not excite any very strong surprise when it is remembered that some of their officers were ignorant even of the words of command. Such is the result of a system in which men are raised to high posts in the army through nepotism and favouritism. Where merit is never encouraged, it will seldom be found. The doctrine of supply and demand applies to the virtues, as to other things.

The Turkish soldier, I must again repeat, is a brave, loyal, long-suffering, hardy fellow, and, if well led, is inferior to no soldier in the world. The national decay occasioned by the venality, the rapacity, and intrigue combined with the indolence and sensualism of the higher orders of Turkish officials, has scarcely yet reached the over-worked, ill-paid, and maltreated commonalty, who are often preserved by their very poverty and sufferings from the crimes, vices, and abominations which degrade their social superiors. So great is the suspicion produced by the unfair dealing of Turkish officials, that it was only because of the confidence reposed in the honour of the British Government that many of the

Lazistan riflemen accepted our offers and entered Kars to assist in its defence. Many of the Bashi-Bazooks also flocked to our standard, but were scarcely so acceptable as the Lazistan warriors, for the keep of their horses was a drain upon our resources which scarcely compensated for their services.

In April arrived Vassif Pasha (the Mushir) from Constantinople, where he had been appointed to the command of the army in Asia Minor. This selection was in many respects a fortunate one. Though neither an experienced nor a skilful general, he was, among Turkish Pashas, that strange phenomenon—an honest man. Moreover he possessed the available merit of being alive to his own incapacity, and this absence of the vanity which usually marks his order, made him ready to adopt the advice of others. In the following month a camp was pitched within the entrenchments, and an order of the day read. On the 7th of June General Williams himself arrived from Erzeroum, and on this and the following day reviewed the troops. Captain Thompson had by his incessant exertions got the infantry into a better state of discipline; efforts had been made to get in such provisions as we could; no stone had been left unturned to fortify our position as strongly as possible; and though the Mushir at Kars and the

Seraskier at Constantinople thought that it would be impossible for us to hold the place, we felt confident that we could do so as long as the provisions lasted.* Meanwhile General Mouravieff had assembled his army of from 30,000 to 40,000 men within but a short distance of our entrenchments. Our force on the other hand did not number more than 14,000 infantry, 1500 artillerymen, and a small body of cavalry, while this branch of the service in the Russian army was large and efficient.

With this formidable foe in front of us, the Turks were, nevertheless, little disposed to bate one jot of their religious observances, especially inasmuch as the rites in question involved a temporary enjoyment of the indolence which they

* An order of the day had previously to this been issued—a copy of which was brought into Kars by one of our spies. I will not positively answer for its authenticity, though I see no just ground for doubting it. It ran as follows :

(COPIE.)

“Ordre du jour, donné par le Général en Chef Mouravieff au corps Russe, concentré auprès Gumri. Cet ordre du jour était reçu par les troupes avec hurrah en espérance du butin.

“SOLDATS !

“L'Ordre de notre auguste Souverain est de prendre Kars à tout prix. Ne croyez pas d'y trouver ces généraux qui vous étaient en face l'année passée sur l'aile gauche de l'ennemi ceux ci ont été éloignés.

“Des Généraux valereux et instruits sont à la tête de l'ennemi, la fortification de Kars est en bonne état, mais il faut vaincre ces obstacles, car c'est la volonté de notre Souverain, et nous vengerons par ça notre defunct Empereur.

(Signé)

“MURAVIEF.”

so dearly love. They are enjoined by their religion, as long as this forty days' festival lasts, to abstain totally from food or water during the day—and as it was perfectly clear to me that men rigorously fasting could not work energetically, I waited on the Mushir, accompanied by Captain Thompson, and ventured to remonstrate with him on the inexpediency of too strict an observance, under the pressing circumstances of the case, of their usual customs. Will it be believed that the Mushir timidly objected to support my view of the question, though my suggestions were backed, by what to him and his countrymen should have been considered good authority, a quotation from the Koran to the effect that “in time of war or urgent need, the Baïram feast may be dispensed with”? I was compelled, therefore, to refer the matter to Her Majesty's Commissioner—but meanwhile the Mushir relented, and the time-honoured institution of the Baïram was *pro tem.* suspended.

General Mouravieff, though he did not fail to appreciate the influence possessed by European officers and brought to bear even upon the stubborn and superstitious Turk, scarcely gave us credit for such powers as could interfere with a religious holiday. His preparations, therefore, being made upon what, but for our energetic interference, would have been a correct hypothesis, on the 16th, that

being the great day of the festival, he sought to steal a march on us, and advanced rapidly to the attack. The General's despatch to Lord Clarendon is so graphic a sketch of the repulse of the Russians, that I am sure even those who have ere this read it in the Blue Book will be gratified by a re-perusal of it here. It is, at any rate, a clearer and more concise account of the engagement than I could hope to give the reader myself.

“KARS, *June 17th*, 1855.

“MY LORD,

“Yesterday, being the feast of the Baïram, I fully anticipated an attack, and the troops were consequently held in readiness throughout the preceding night, and stood to their arms before daylight.

“Our advanced posts were driven in soon after daylight, and the Russian army appeared on the height about half-past six o'clock: its advanced guard consisted of three regiments of Regular Cossacks, supported by artillery and rockets. The main body of infantry marched in three columns, flanked by three regiments of Dragoons and supported by six batteries of eight guns each. In the rear appeared a strong column of reserve infantry, then the waggons carrying, as I have since heard, three

days' provisions. The whole force could not have been less than twenty-five thousand.

“ Nothing could be more perfect than the handling of the enemy's army as it advanced upon the front of our entrenchments formed by the line of works called Arab Tabia, Karadagh, and Hafiz Pasha Tabia, and facing the Gumri road. Our cavalry, pickets, and Bashi-Bazooks retired, skirmishing with the regular Cossacks until within one thousand yards of our lines, when the enemy's cavalry made a desperate rush supported by its reserves of skirmishers, and also by a rocket troop, to enter the camp with our outnumbered cavalry under Baron de Schwartzenburg; but they were instantly checked by the artillery from Arab Tabia, Karadagh, and Hafiz Pasha Tabia; they then fell back upon the main body of the Russian army, which retired in the same order in which it had advanced; and after halting for a few minutes finally disappeared over the hills, and has resumed its old camping ground at Zaïm and Akché-Kalla.

“ As the enemy carried off their dead, we could not ascertain their loss, but it is estimated from one hundred to one hundred and fifty; ours amounted to six killed and eight wounded.

“ The spirit of the Turkish troops was excellent, evincing, as they did, as much readiness in the

defence as they had shown in the construction of their épaulements. If the enemy had attempted to carry his original intention into execution, he would, I confidently believe, have met with signal disaster.

“The precautions which I have recommended the Mushir to take are in no wise slackened, and we are now preparing for an attack of the heights in the rear of the city. The labour of the officers of my staff have been incessant, and I have to record my thanks to Colonel Lake, to Major Teesdale, and Captain Thompson, and to Dr. Sandwith, as well as to Messrs. Churchill and Zohrab, the secretaries and interpreters, whose duties are equally arduous and fatiguing.

“I have, &c., &c.,

(Signed)

“W. F. WILLIAMS.”

Two days after the defeat of June 16th, Mouravieff broke up his camps at Zaïm and Akché-Kalla, and by a flank march surrounded our entrenchments, placing himself within an hour's march of the weakest part of our position. Our communications with Erzeroum were shortly after intercepted. The incessant rain, while it damaged our entrenchments at the time, delayed any attack on our lines; but on the 26th a reconnoissance in great force was made, which at first had all the

appearance of an attack until the enemy halted out of the range of our guns. Two days afterwards the Russians moved their camp and took up a position on the south-west, by way of more effectually intercepting any supplies from Erzeroum. On the 29th fifteen battalions of infantry, forty guns, and three regiments of cavalry marched in the direction of Yenikeui, and did us infinite mischief, by destroying two months' provisions, consisting of magazines of biscuit, wheat, and barley. In addition to these calamities our spies were untrustworthy, and the Bashi-Bazooks, who continued to join us, anything but efficient. Beyond the patience of the Turkish soldiers, their industry at the works, and the vigilance of my chief and brother-officers, there is little to be remembered with satisfaction. Moreover, we were harassed by a report that battalions of Russian troops, who had lately been expelled from the forts in the Black Sea, had reached Tiflis, and would soon add to the strength of our pertinacious and unwearied foe.

On the 31st of July General Mouravieff broke up his camp at Byook-Tikmeh, and stationed fifteen battalions of infantry, one regiment of Dragoons, two of Cossacks, five hundred irregular cavalry, and forty guns, in a strong position in a southerly direction at Komansoor. News, however, shortly after arrived to the effect that the General had

moved the greater portion of this force and had taken the road towards Soghanli-Dagh, commanding the detachment in person. Whatever their intentions may have been, (and we had at the time scarcely any reliable information on this or any other matter,) they were not brilliantly successful in executing them; for in less than a fortnight they returned to the camp. During all this period had we possessed any adequate cavalry force, we might have harassed the enemy with effect. As it was we were compelled, beyond frequent slight skirmishes which took place between our Bashi-Bazooks and the Russian horse, to confine ourselves to the work of strengthening our fortifications, hoping against hope for supplies. In his despatch of the 25th of August, addressed to Lord Clarendon, our General wrote :

“I am sorry to inform your Lordship that great apathy reigns at Erzeroum, from the highest functionary to the lowest; every Pasha and Bey who has been charged with missions from this camp to that city has, in his turn, disappeared from the scene—a scene from which all of high rank are glad to escape. I therefore trust that, through your Lordship’s representations, they may receive from the Porte the most stringent orders to execute the directions forwarded to them by the Mushir.”

While we had to endure this neglect the enemy

was receiving reinforcements, pressing more closely on our pickets and advanced posts—forage became so scanty that we were compelled to send away our half-starved cavalry horses, and so closely were we now beleagured that we could scarcely get a messenger safely out of the camp. A memorandum made by our General on Sept. 1st, received by Consul Brant at Erzeroum at sunset on the 5th, proves our condition at this crisis of the blockade. "The most is made of our provisions; the soldier is reduced to half allowances of bread and meat, or rice-butter; sometimes 100 drachms of biscuit instead of bread; nothing besides. No money. Mussulman population (3000 rifles) will soon be reduced to starvation. Armenians are ordered to quit the town to-morrow. No barley; scarcely any forage. Cavalry reduced to walking skeletons, and sent out of garrison; artillery horses soon the same. How will the field pieces be moved after that? The apathy of superior officers is quite distressing. We can hold out two months more. What is being done for the relief of the army?

"W. F. WILLIAMS."

Early in this month the weather grew suddenly cold, snow fell on the surrounding hills, and we experienced the violence of the equinoctial gales. The want of provisions, and the approach of severe

weather struck such terror into the hearts of some, that desertion became a very common occurrence. To check this formidable evil, measures of vigorous severity were imperatively called for. It would have been worse than a false humanity to have risked the lives of the brave, and the fortunes of our glorious cause, from a sentimental sympathy with dastards and traitors.* To such an extent did desertion prevail, that there was but one course left,—that of making a public example; and the execution of two men guilty of the crime, and the disbanding of a regiment of the Rediff, convinced the troops and inhabitants that there did exist an authority which could punish such offences summarily. The result was most beneficial.

Late in the month of September the cholera appeared among us, and came almost simultaneously with the news that Sebastopol had fallen, as if to check our exultation at that glorious intelligence. The enemy meanwhile moved so many loaded arabas and carts in the direction of Gumri as to induce us for a time to believe that he would abandon the blockade.

On the morning of September 29th, however, we were soon very practically convinced that this had

* It is gratifying, as General Williams remarked in more than one despatch, to think that in no instance did any Christian subject of the Porte betray the cause of the Sultan.

only been a strategical feint intended to mislead us, and that, before leaving us masters of our position, one brave and desperate struggle to dislodge us would be made. This long and deadly contest occupied nearly the whole day, and ended, as my readers already know, and as I proudly record, in the total defeat of the enemy.*

On the evening of that memorable day our General addressed the following despatch to the Earl of Clarendon, who, as he has so warmly and strenuously encouraged our efforts, must have heard with more than ordinary pleasure of our success.

“KARS, *September 29th*, 1855.

“MY LORD,

“My despatch of yesterday should have borne the date of the 28th instead of the 29th September.

“I have now the honour to inform your Lordship that General Mouravieff, with the bulk of his army, at daydawn this morning attacked our entrenched position on the heights above Kars, and

* As an attempt to describe this sanguinary engagement will be found in one of my letters, as well as pictures of it in those of Major Teesdale and Captain Thompson, I avoid any sketch of it here.

on the opposite side of the river. The battle lasted without a moment's intermission for nearly seven hours, when the enemy was driven off in the greatest disorder with the loss of 2500 dead, and nearly double that number of wounded, who were for the most part carried off by the retreating enemy. Upwards of 4000 muskets were left on the field.

“Your Lordship can, without a description on my part, imagine the determination of the assailants and the undaunted courage of the troops who defended the position for so many hours.

“The Mushir will doubtlessly at a future moment bring before his government the conduct of those officers who have distinguished themselves on this day—a day so glorious for the Turkish arms.

“On my part I have great gratification in acquainting your Lordship with the gallant conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Lake, Major Teesdale, and Captain Thompson, who rendered most important service in defending the redoubts of Veli-Pasha Tabia, Tahmasb Tabia, and Arab-Tabia. I beg to recommend these officers to your Lordship's protection.

“I beg also to name my secretary, Mr. Churchill, an attaché of Her Majesty's mission in Persia; he directed the fire of a battery throughout the action, and caused the enemy great loss.

“ I also beg to draw your Lordship's attention to the gallant bearing of Messrs. Zohrab and Rennison, who, as interpreters to Lieut-Colonel Lake and Major Teesdale, rendered very effective service. Dr. Sandwith has been most active and efficient in the management of the ambulances and in the hospital arrangements.

“ We are now employed in the burial of the dead, and I shall have the honour by the next messenger of detailing the movements of this eventful day. Our loss was about 700 killed and wounded.

“ I have, &c. &c.

(Signed) “ W. F. WILLIAMS.”

On the following day General Williams wrote: “ If we had only possessed a few hundred cavalry we should have utterly destroyed their army: their loss in officers had been enormous, and they behaved splendidly; three were killed on the platform of the gun in Tachmasb Tabia, which at that moment was worked by Major Teesdale, who then sprung out and led two charges with the bayonet; the Turks fought like heroes. Colonel Lake retook the English Tabias, with the bayonet, too; and Captain Thompson crushed them with his guns from Arab Tabia.” And in the more detailed despatch of the 3rd of October, the General enters into the principal events of the day. The reader

will be glad to refresh his memory with one or two extracts.

“ At four o'clock on the eventful morning of the 29th, the enemy's columns were reported to be advancing on the Tachmasb front. They were three in number, supported by twenty-four guns; the first or right column being directed on Tachmasb Tabia, the second on Yuksek Tabia, and the third on the breastwork called Rennison Lines. As soon as the first gun announced the approach of the enemy, the reserves were put under arms in a central position, from which succours could be despatched either to Tachmasb or the English lines.

“ The mist and imperfect light of the dawning day induced the enemy to believe that he was about to surprise us; he advanced with his usual steadiness and intrepidity, but in getting within range, he was saluted with a crushing fire of artillery from all points of the line: this unexpected reception, however, only drew forth loud hurrahs from the Russian infantry, as it rushed up the hill on the redoubts and breastworks. These works poured forth a fire of musketry and rifles, which told with fearful effect on the close columns of attack, more especially on the left one, which being opposed by a battalion of 450 chasseurs, armed with Minié rifles, was after long and desperate fighting

completely broken and sent headlong down the hill, leaving 850 dead on the field, besides those carried off by their comrades.

“The central column precipitated itself on the redoubts of Tachmasb and Yuksek Tabias, where desperate fighting occurred, and lasted for several hours, the enemy being repulsed in all his attempts to enter the closed redoubts, which mutually flanked each other with their artillery and musketry, and made terrible havoc in the ranks of the assailants; and it was here that General Kmety and Hussein Pasha so conspicuously displayed their courageous conduct. Lieutenant-General Kerim Pasha also repaired to the scene of desperate strife to encourage the troops, and was wounded in the shoulder, and had two horses killed under him.

“The right column of the Russian infantry, supported by a battery, eventually turned the left flank of the entrenched wing of the Tachmasb defences, and whilst the Russian battery opened on the rear of the closed redoubt at its salient angle, their infantry penetrated considerably behind our position. Observing the commencement of this movement, and anticipating its consequences,*

* I shall not apologise, except to Sir W. Fenwick Williams himself, for availing myself so copiously of his despatches. Apart from their literary merit as graphic descriptions, they enable me to avoid the *Ego et Rex meus* tone, for which I have already in the Preface asked allowance.

Lieutenant-Colonel Lake, who had taken the direction of affairs in the English Tabias, was instructed to send a battalion from Fort Lake to the assistance of the defenders of Tachmasb, and at the same time two battalions of the reserve were moved across the flying bridge, and upon the rocky height of Laz Teppè Tabia. These three reinforcing columns met each other at that point, and being hidden from the enemy by the rocky nature of the ground, confronted him at a most opportune moment; they deployed, opened their fire, which stopped, and soon drove back the enemy's reserves, which were then vigorously charged with the bayonet, at the same moment when General Kmety and Major Teesdale issued from the redoubts at Tachmasb and charged the assailants. The whole of that portion of the enemy's infantry and artillery now broke and fled down the heights under a murderous fire of musketry. This occurred at half-past eleven, after a combat of seven hours.

“In this part of the field the enemy had, including his reserves, twenty-two battalions of infantry, a large force of Dragoons and Cossacks, together with thirty-two guns.

“Whilst this struggle, which I have attempted to describe, was occurring at Tachmasb, a most severe combat was going on at the eastern portion of the line called the English Tabias.

“About half-past five o'clock P.M. a Russian column, consisting of eight battalions of infantry, three regiments of cavalry, and sixteen guns, advanced from the valley of Tchakmak, and assaulted those small redoubts, which, after as stout a resistance as their unavoidably feeble garrisons could oppose, fell into their hands, together with the connecting breastworks defended by the townsmen and mountaineers from Lazistan, whose clannish flags, according to their custom, were planted before them on the epaulements, and consequently fell into the enemy's hands; but ere the firing had begun in this portion of the field, Captain Thompson had received orders to send a battalion of infantry from each of the heights of Karadagh and Arab Tabia to reinforce the English lines. This reinforcement descended the deep gully through which flows the Kars river, passed a bridge recently thrown across it, and ascended the opposite precipitous bank by a zig-zag path which led into the line of works named by the Turks Ingliz Tabias—the English batteries. Their arrival was as opportune as that of the reserves directed towards Tachmasb, which I have had the honour to describe in the former part of this despatch: these battalions, joined to those directed by Lieut.-Colonel Lake, gallantly attacked and drove the Russians out of the redoubts at the point of the bayonet after the artillery of the enemy

had been driven from those lines by the cross-fire directed from Fort Lake, and from Arab-Tabia, and Karadagh by Captain Thompson. This officer deserves my best thanks for having seized a favourable moment to remove a heavy gun from the eastern to the western extremity of Karadagh, and with it inflicted severe loss on the enemy. During this combat, which lasted nearly seven hours, the Turkish infantry, as well as artillery, fought with the most determined courage; and when it is recollected that they had worked on their entrenchments, and guarded them by night throughout a period extending to nearly four months; when it is borne in mind that they were ill-clothed, and received less than half a ration of bread, that they have remained without pay for twenty-nine months, I think your Lordship will admit that they have proved themselves worthy of the admiration of Europe, and established an undoubted claim to be placed amongst the most distinguished of its troops."

The enemy, in spite of the enormous loss they had suffered, kept up the blockade with increased vigilance; and, although they sent their wounded and much of their baggage to Gumri, the erection of huts in their camps sufficiently proved their intention to brave the inclemency of the approaching winter, in order to starve us into a capitulation.

Any record of the few weeks which succeeded our brilliant success on the 29th September must indeed be sad. Cholera, at first abating from the moral exertion and physical excitement, and all the fierce energies stirred by the perils of the battle-field, now crept stealthily again upon us when the roar of our cannon was hushed into the sad silence of expectation, and the dreadful despondency of hope deferred. About one thousand of the troops perished by this deadly pestilence. The sights and sounds by which we were surrounded were not such as to inspire men with the strength which may sometimes shake off a dangerous epidemic. Our scanty stores daily diminishing,—false reports of the advent of reinforcements and supplies,—deserters again, notwithstanding the awe at first inspired by summary capital punishments, flying from the beleaguered city under the cover of the night at the risk of their lives,—horses dying of starvation and their putrid carcasses lying unburied, the prey of hungry wild dogs now,* but soon to be

* On the 19th of November General Williams wrote to Mr. Consul Brant his last despatch from Kars before the capitulation. "Tell Lords Clarendon and Redcliffe that the Russian army is hutted now, and takes no notice either of Omar or Selim Pashas. They cannot have acted as they ought to have done. We divide our bread with the starving towns-people. No animal food for seven weeks. I kill horses in my stable secretly, and send the meat to the hospital, which is now very crowded. We can hold out and try to retreat over the mountains *vid* Olti. Have provi-

the food of man,—and at last wretched creatures eating roots and grass ;—small doles of provisions sparingly given to more than half-starved beings, only enough, sometimes, to kindle fresh appetite without supporting life,—women bringing their children to our doors and leaving them there to die,—all these are a few features in that black and ghastly picture of horror and suffering that still clouds my memory like the hovering phantoms of some hideous dream. Human nature could bear no more. Whatever courage may have suggested, humanity had higher claims, especially on men who had proved that they did not lack courage. A few days more, and the troops would have been too weak and prostrate, had the enemy again assailed our entrenchments, to have either defended them with success or to have retreated in safety. Nothing was left but to capitulate on the most honourable and advantageous terms, which might be granted by an enemy who so well knew our prowess that it was to be hoped he would respect our misfortunes.

On the 22nd a foot-messenger reached Kars with a despatch from Mr. Brant, Consul at Erzeroum. That despatch stated how very slight were the probabilities of any timely succour being sent.

sions sent in that direction, ere the 18th day after this date. We shall carry three days' biscuit with us."

For a day the General would not divulge its contents. He then summoned General Kmety from his station, and having conferred with us all determined to summon the Pashas together next morning, to hold a council on the position in which we were placed. On the 24th they assembled, and one and all declared that it was impossible to prolong the resistance, and that the men were too much exhausted to make a successful retreat. Under these circumstances General Williams had but one course open to him. Major Teesdale was despatched, after the breaking up of the assembly, with a flag of truce to the Russian camp, to request an interview with General Mouravieff for the next day, and did not return until after night-fall. Meanwhile the Hungarian Generals Kolman and Kmety thought that they should best consult their own personal safety by attempting to make their way through the Russian patrols and escape to Erzeroum. They feared that whatever terms our General might endeavour to gain for them, the enemy would feel bound by treaty to give up these brave and illustrious exiles to the vengeance of despotic Austria. They were warmly thanked for the courageous part they had borne in our dangers and difficulties, and no small degree of anxiety harassed our minds after their departure as to the success of the desperate

expedient they had resolved to adopt. Their departure occasioned some suspicions in the minds of the troops, who were as yet ignorant of the General's intentions. On the 25th General Williams and his Aide-de-camp rode over to General Mouravieff's quarters, and a conference on the subject of a capitulation took place. "The Mushir," wrote General Williams to Lord Clarendon, "deputed me to treat with General Mouravieff, and I consequently waited on His Excellency on the 25th instant. He at first seemed determined to make prisoners of all who defended the place, but as the Rediff or Militia and the towns-people formed a large portion of the infantry, I made a successful appeal to his humanity, which, coupled with the obvious measure of destroying our artillery and stores, to which we should have had recourse, previous to an unconditional surrender, brought about the convention which I have now the honour to inclose for your Lordship's information, without the expression of unavailing regret." *

* Dr. Sandwith describes the interview between the English and Russian General in a highly dramatic manner. "If you grant not these,' (*i. e.* the terms proposed,) exclaimed the General (Williams), 'every gun shall be burst, every standard burnt, every trophy destroyed, and you may then work your will on a famished crowd.' 'I have no wish,' answered Mouravieff, 'to wreak an unworthy vengeance on a gallant and long-suffering army which has covered itself with glory, and only yields to famine. Look here!' he

The inclosure alluded to was a copy of the Convention, of which the following is a *précis*.

I. The fortress of Kars shall be delivered up intact.

II. The garrison of Kars, with the Turkish Commander-in-chief, shall march out with the honours of war, and become prisoners. The officers, in consideration of their gallant defence of the place, shall retain their swords.

III. The private property of the whole garrison shall be respected.

IV. The Rediff (militia), Bashi-Bazooks, and Laz, shall be allowed to return to their homes.

V. The non-combatants, such as medical officers, scribes, and hospital attendants, shall be allowed to return to their homes.

VI. General Williams shall be allowed the privilege of making a list of certain Hungarian and other European officers, to enable them to return to their homes.

VII. The persons mentioned in the articles 4, 5, and 6, are in honour bound not to serve against Russia during the present war.

exclaimed, pointing to a lump of bread and a handful of roots, 'what splendid troops must these be who can stand to their arms in this severe climate, on food such as this ! General Williams, you have made yourself a name in history, and posterity will stand amazed at the endurance, the courage, and the discipline which this siege has called forth in the remains of an army. Let us arrange a capitulation that will satisfy the demands of war without outraging humanity.' "

VIII. The inhabitants of Kars will be protected in their persons and property.

IX. The public buildings and the monuments of the town will be respected.

November 27th, 1855.

So ended the blockade of Kars. Many a useful lesson may be gathered from its sad strange story, but it is my duty rather to narrate than to moralise.

I must conclude this chapter by saying that the men, whom, despite their undaunted courage and perseverance, we had driven back with death and disaster from our strongholds, now received us with a courtesy, a genial and graceful hospitality, which will ever redound to their honour.

[The following letters of the late Captain Thompson will supply many details which I have in the above brief chapter purposely omitted.]

A. L.

LETTER I.

"ERZEROUM, March 8th, 1855.

"We arrived at the Dardanelles at 12 noon, on the 22nd of January, and after stopping there for an hour or so, we went on to Cape Barberri, which

we reached at 1 P.M. We did not remain long there, but proceeded to Constantinople, where we arrived at 10 A.M. the next morning. The views of Pera and Constantinople from the water are very lovely ; it looks quite a paradise : but if you wish that impression to remain go *not* on shore ; for of all the filthy dens I ever beheld in the course of my experience Pera is the filthiest. We landed soon after letting go the anchor, and went ashore to Mysseri's Hotel. You are, I dare say, familiar with the name of Mysseri. He was the servant and dragoman of 'Eothen.'

" He charges fifteen francs a day for your bed and board solely. Everything else, such as candles, tea, fire in your room, are charged extra, and enormously ; one item I give you. I had a small stove in my room, and having a cold one night, I told the servant to light the fire. No coal was used, only wood, and for that and a candle to light me to bed, I was charged *eight francs*. The first day we arrived we dined with General Beatson, who is raising the irregular cavalry force out here. He has his wife with him, and is very comfortable with his English servants. On the 24th we took a caique and crossed the Bosphorus to see the hospitals at Scutari. The men appeared to be very well cared for, and comfortable. I presented one or two of them with a

cigar, with which they were highly delighted, and I had a long talk with one of the sisters of charity. On our return it was blowing very fresh, and having a drunken boatman we were nearly carried out to sea. However we weathered the Seraglio point, and got home just in time for dinner. *Mem.* You are obliged to walk about Pera in jack boots, to keep you out of the mud and dirt. On the 25th I went to the embassy to get my letters, and see Lord Stratford, and in the afternoon we visited the Mosque of St. Sophia, which is very splendid; but of course you know almost as much about it as I can tell you, so I will spare you the description. On the 26th and 27th we walked about amusing ourselves, and on the 28th started for Balaclava, in the 'Hope' steam transport, and arrived there on the 31st, early in the morning.

"After breakfast we started for the camp, and about a mile from Balaclava came to Brigadier-General Scarlett's head-quarters, where we found Elliot, who mounted us capitally on ponies, and escorted us all over the camp and the field of Inkermann. We also had a long talk with Sir Colin Campbell. The camp you must have read all about in the papers, therefore I will say nothing concerning it, except that it is not half so bad as it is represented to be in the newspapers.

"The next day (1st of February) we started in

H.M.S. 'Sanspareil' for Chersonese Bay, and arrived the same evening. I very much astonished S—— by walking on board the 'Algiers' that evening after dinner. He gave us a shake-down on board, and the next morning Olpherts started again for the English camp; whilst S—— and myself went up to the French lines, where we fraternised with the officers, and then came back to the ship to dinner. As I had a very bad cold I stayed on board till Tuesday the 6th, when I went back to Constantinople in the 'Medina' steamer, and arrived there on the morning of the 8th. I found an invitation waiting for me, from Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, for an evening party, to which I went. On Sunday the 11th, I dined on board the 'London,' with Lieutenant Twyford, a friend of S——'s. We went to the opera on Monday evening, also on Tuesday. On Wednesday the 14th, I wrote letters, and then took my traps on board the steamer which was to take us up the Black Sea; she was also named the 'London,' and we started in her the next day. We arrived at Sinope on Friday the 16th; at Samsoon on the 17th, and at Trebisonde early on Sunday morning. We expect to start for Kars on Monday or Tuesday next. It is only four days' journey, but the snow is knee-deep, and it will be nasty travelling."

LETTER II.

“KARS, Sunday, March 25th, 1855.

“Our party here consists of Olpherts, myself, and Mr. Zohrab, who is our interpreter and a very nice fellow. On the week-days we ride about among the troops, and see them drilled, look after the provisions, bully the Colonels and Pashas, write our reports, eat our dinner, and go to bed. There is no variety, ‘*Les jours se suivent et se ressemblent.*’ I wrote a long letter to Mr. —, the other day and told him all about our army here. This is a shockingly ugly place. There is not a single tree within miles of us, and the country is covered with snow. I was quite blinded by the glare on my way up from Erzeroum, and was two days before I got my eyes well again. I found crape spectacles of great use.

“We have been paying a round of state visits to the Commander-in-Chief, Kerim Pasha, and the Commander of the Province of Kars, Suri Pasha, and all the rest of the big-wigs here. The correct form is this,—you walk into the room; the Pasha gets up, salaams and shakes hands; you then sit down upon the divan, and he again bows to you, and you return it. The Pasha then claps his hands, and attendants appear with long pipes, with beautiful amber mouth-pieces,

already lighted, which they give to each person. The Pasha again claps his hands, re-enter attendants with small cups of coffee and sherbet for each of the company,—you smoke and drink coffee in silence for a short time till a sudden thought seems to strike the Pasha, and he asks you if you are well, to which knotty question you return a favourable answer, and the conversation becomes general. The Pasha of course exhibits an incredible amount of ignorance on every common subject, and takes everything you say for granted. After you have smoked yourself into a white heat, and then endeavoured to allay it with coffee, you rise, shake hands, bow, and retire; and the same scene, pipes, coffee, conversation, and ignorance, takes place at the next house you visit. They (the Turks) are far behind the natives of India, both in civilisation and intelligence, and are a very debauched, good-for-nothing set.

“I have not been able to get a horse yet. They are very scarce and dear, just at present, as the Turkish government is buying them all up. When I do get one, I shall write and tell you all about him, colour, height, &c.; it will be something to write about in this dearth of news. We hear nothing up here about the progress of the siege (of Sebastopol). I suppose the intelligence reaches you long before it gets to this out-of-the-way place. We have just heard of the death of the

Emperor from a Russian deserter, who came in yesterday. If I get any more news I will write again, as the post does not go out for some days."

LETTER III.

"KARS, 3rd April, 1855.

"I got your welcome letter yesterday afternoon, and hasten to acquaint you that I am utterly disgusted with society at large, and you in particular, because I don't get one every day. You have no idea what a treat it is to receive letters out here; to-day I have had five, all at once, and have been reading them all day long. You want to hear about myself; I don't know what to tell you except that my digestion is capital, and that I am well off for tobacco, and consequently don't care a straw for the discomforts of this country. As for newspapers, we are pretty well supplied, thank you. We get the 'Times,' the 'Illustrated News,' and 'Punch.' If you can send any others without expense, do so, but not otherwise, for one of your letters is worth fifty thousand papers. Colonel Lake arrived here yesterday; he and I get on swimmingly together.

"The dearth of news at present is excessive. The snow is rapidly melting and making the roads muddy, and in some places impracticable, so that drilling troops is out of the question. It still

freezes very hard every night, and the streets of the town are as slippery as a frozen pond at home; I am quite afraid to ride over them, and always have my horse led to the outside of the town before I mount him.

“The post here is very annoying in its arrangements. The letters come in one day, and have all to be answered to go out by the next, so that it leaves very little time for scribbling, which is a nuisance for us, though perhaps rather satisfactory to our friends. You, or rather R., sent out that copy of the ‘Arabian Nights,’ which you bought, I think, for the youthful Edward; it was not worth sending back, so I gave it to a young friend of mine, *ætatis* 12, a son of the English consul at Erzeroum, who was very civil to me on my journey. The lad is [a very clever fellow, and I took quite a fancy to him. I will direct R. to purchase a handsomer copy, and present it to Edward with my compliments, as a reward for distinguished merit. I hope he did not get the prize you told me of for being, like R., *ninth* head of his class; on enquiry in his case the class was found to consist of only nine boys—the inference is obvious!—Good night! I must turn in now, or I shan’t be in time for parade in the morning. So with best love to all, &c. &c.”

LETTER IV.

“KARS, 16th April.

“Here is another Sunday, and I sit down for another scribble.

“I have just returned from visiting one of our outposts. I travelled on horseback, and had a squadron of cavalry with me as a guard; you can have no idea of the state with which we move about on such occasions. On my arrival, the whole regiment turned out and saluted me as a general officer; indeed, my actual dignity here is far higher. But to continue. On my arrival (after being saluted by the troops) the Commandant of the place, by name Mustapha Bey, placed his house at my disposal, which offer I was graciously pleased to accept, and a grand dinner, *à la Turque*, was provided for my ‘Excellency.’ The Colonel refused for a long time to sit down in my presence, and was only induced to do so by my refusing to ‘feed’ until he did. We had a very fine dinner, and I honoured him by sleeping in his bed, (with clean sheets, of course!) and the next morning I inspected his regiment, which was in very good order, breakfasted at his expense, and rode out accompanied by a guard of honour. This man had been previously reprimanded for not paying sufficient respect to the English

'Beys,' and he was as afraid of me as if I had been a tiger.

"I am going to-morrow to visit another out-post, where I expect to get a little shooting, which will vary the monotony of this vile place. Things go on much as usual in 'these parts.' The Russians in Georgia are all at loggerheads; at least so we hear from Polish deserters, who are continually coming in, and we are doing our best to be ready for them in case they take a fancy to Kars. Newspapers we do not much require, as I told you in my last. *Beer* would be much more serviceable, but that of course is not to be had. I am getting very tired of water as a beverage, and begin to be of Mr. H——s' opinion, 'that a bottle of it *well corked* ought to last a life-time!' I hold it to be a good thing for washing in, and also for culinary purposes, but 'weiter nichts!' We have a capital cook, who compounds messes for us, which I look at with aversion, and eat with considerable awe. I never venture to inquire of what animal or vegetable they are manufactured: I live principally on tobacco. I am much interrupted by the children here, who *will* knock at my window, and consume my substance in the way of pennies or piastres. Two of them have taken a great fancy to me, and bring me fresh eggs daily for breakfast. Of course they swindle me out of about four times their value—they continue

bringing eggs, and I continue to give 'Backsheesh' for them.

"I have just returned from a grand parade held in honour of our new 'Mushir,' or Commander-in-Chief, who is just arrived. What do you think of *this*? We have a real European *lady* in Kars! She is the wife of one of the Hungarian officers here. She only arrived yesterday, and I hastened to throw myself at her feet, and commence immediate worship. Poor creature, she must find it dreadfully dull here! She does not smoke or drink grog, so I don't know what she *is* to do. She can't drill troops, can't talk English, and hasn't got a piano. She is rather pretty, but as she is already married, we poor wretches have no chance. I think we must ask the General to send her back to Constantinople.

"H. L. T."

LETTER V.

"KARS, *April*, 1855.

"We have just finished our dinner and pipes; and to-day being Sunday there are no parades, therefore I shall write to you. This morning I went to see a Hungarian refugee, who is now in the Turkish service. He is no renegade, and a perfect gentleman, which is a rare thing to meet with up here. He and I have struck up a great friendship,

and I am beginning to talk German again well, and also, though I fear you won't believe it, I am in the habit of speaking as much French daily as English. It is astonishing how it comes back to one with a little practice; you will be quite amazed at my proficiency when I return. Many of the Turkish officers of rank have been to military colleges in France, and speak French well; and as I don't speak Turkish, I am obliged to issue my orders in French, and so find my slight knowledge of it very useful. Our interpreter has just come in with a bottle of '*Raki*,' and an intimation that it must be immediately discussed with the addition of hot water and sugar, so I shall shut up for to-night.

"We have been all over the position to-day, and had a long walk. It is not a very strong place, the works being too much scattered, but the Russians have not, at present, above 25,000 men in Georgia, and I think we can manage them at any rate.

"I send you some snow-drops which I picked in one of the batteries; they are *blue* and not white, like the English ones.

"H. L. T."

LETTER VI.

"KARS, *May 10th*, 1855.

"How on earth I manage to write you such long letters from this hole I know not. There is nothing at all to write about, and no conveniences for writing comfortably, but still I manage to spin my scrawls out to a very respectable length, notwithstanding. I have just taken a house, or rather room, to myself, in a separate house from the rest, as I had to trudge through the kitchen to my old one, which was unpleasant, and the fire smoked so abominably that I never could stay in it five minutes together. This, my present quarters, is a very clean little place, with a nice view of a large dung-heap, covered with small children and mangy dogs. It is the same with every house in Kars.

"We have had no Sebastopol or English news here for a very long time. I had a letter from R—— and from S——, but neither of them gave me any news at all, and the last paper I have seen was dated the 12th of March, so you see I am very far behind the times, just at present. It is very amusing to take a telescope up to the top of the house, and look at the Turkish women from a respectful distance. The moment one of them discovers that you are looking at her, she covers up her face, and runs off into the house, but you are

sure to see her directly afterwards at the window; they are quite as fond of being looked at as any English lasses, indeed rather more so, as they don't enjoy so many opportunities. There is a very pretty girl about three houses off, to whom I make fierce love, in dumb show. She is exceedingly delighted at being taken notice of by so exalted a personage as myself, and no doubt fancies she has made an impression upon the 'Sheshanajee Bey'—*Anglicè*, rifle officer,—which is the name I go by here. I think I must learn some love-speeches, and howl them out across the house-tops. Turkish and I get on very slowly together. I can understand it a little, but I am a wretched hand at speaking it. We have many deserters from the Russian fort of Gumri, or 'Alexanderopol.' They all state that no preparations are being made at present for attacking Kars, and that they think the Russians intend to remain on the defensive. I don't much care which way it is. We have made this place very strong, and are now in good spirits, and have plenty of provisions.* We could defy the Russians for months, and very likely force them to a retreat, were they imprudent enough to attempt an attack.

"The climate of Kars is of a rather curious and

* It must be understood, here and subsequently, that these boastful assertions of the amount of supplies in Kars were meant to deceive the enemy, in case of the letters being intercepted.

unpleasant description. When it doesn't rain it hails, and *vice versa*, so you may conclude we have anything but enjoyable weather. I have been up to my middle in mud for the last week, assisting in repairing the out-works and fortifications, and we have got them into such a state, that I almost wish the Russians would come, just to see what a drubbing they would get.

"H. L. T."

LETTER VII.

"KARS, 20th June, 1855.

"Here we are, with the Russians encamped about two miles in our front, and are awaiting their attack with the most praiseworthy serenity. It strikes me that we are something like the two little boys in the story, 'One won't strike, and the other is afraid!' I am convinced that the Russians can never take Kars, as long as our ammunition lasts, and I think it will last longer than their provisions. They will probably have to retire, in case they *do* attack, which seems to me very doubtful. My opinion is, that they will retire without a fight, as soon as they hear of the fall of Sebastopol, which we are hourly expecting. We heard to-day of the fall of Anapa and Taganrog, and some other place, the name of which we could not make out.

“Now, I will tell you of a good skirmish which took place under my battery some three or four days ago. You must know that my battery (the Karadagh, or black hill fort) commands the whole of the north-east front of our position, and our cavalry outposts, to the amount of three regiments, were about two miles in advance.

“Early in the morning, about 5 A.M., I observed, through my glass, some large masses of troops, moving over a hill, in front of the outposts, who began to retire slowly in front of them. This continued for about an hour, when we descried the Russians coming on a little faster. Suddenly they opened into a splendid line of Cossacks, and charged down upon our cavalry, who, I will do them the justice to say, cut and ran for it, in the most nimble and agile manner possible! The only men on our side, who showed any pluck, were the Bashi-Bazooks, who were cut up sadly. However, in a few minutes, the rash Cossacks came right under my guns, and began throwing rockets into our cavalry. But their fun was of very short duration, for, under the General's direction, I opened upon them, at about 800 yards, with several large guns. They must have lost more than 150 men. Our loss was 14 killed, and 24 wounded. We sent them to the right about directly, and they retreated to their camp. They had very few

wounded, as cannon-balls at that distance generally kill, if they hit at all. I can see all that is going on in the Russian camp from my tent-door, and it appears to me that they are all asleep, from which I infer that they are taking it out in the 'balmy' to-day, and mean to attack to-night. I will write you a long description of it, if they do, as it will be a fine sight. I am quite safe up in my eyrie, no one can touch me; and I have a beautiful view all round of what is going on. Good bye for the present.

" 3 P.M. 20th.—I can't think what the Russians are about; they have sent off (secretly) their baggage, and left their tents standing. They are either going to run away to-night, or to make a last attack; I incline to the former opinion. I hope they will go away quietly if they are going at all, as it would at best be nothing more than a night attack, and would not do much credit to either army. I have just had my dinner, consisting of two very tough mutton chops (half raw), six hard-boiled eggs, an incredible quantity of sardines, and about half a yard of a leathery substance which is here termed bread; so you see my appetite has not failed me. I have just written down to the 'Quartier-Général' to tell the General what I have observed of the enemy, and I expect him up very shortly. I hear that several officers are coming out to join us here.

They had better hasten, or all the fun will be over. If the English do land troops at *Anapa* or *Batoum* we shall winter at Tiflis. This is certain, but there is such a painful forgetfulness of our existence on the part of both the Turkish authorities and those of the Allies, that one would imagine that there was no army here, and that Kars was not the key of Anatolia. If the Russians take Kars, there is not a *single regiment* between them and Constantinople, and hardly the means of procuring troops, except from the Crimea, so you may imagine what a fight we must make of it.

“As soon as we have got rid of these Muscovites I am going out to the old Armenian city of Anni, which is at present in ruins, and has been uninhabited for many years ; although they say that the houses are in perfect preservation, and only require doors and windows to make them habitable again. I am told that it is sometimes possible to pick up some very curious old Byzantine and Armenian coins from the Koords in the neighbouring villages, and I may be able to get some for you. I have heard of some very curious coins struck by the Genoese when they were the great traders in this part of the world. Indeed the whole road from Trebizond to Tiflis—nay, the whole country—is covered with the ruins of their fortresses, and those of the Knights’ Templars. I have just received a reinforcement

of three guns into my battery; they are now being placed in position, and the Turks make such a noise about it, that I hardly know what I am writing, so I will stop till to-morrow or this evening.

“7 P.M. 20th.—This is most harassing work. I have not had a good night's rest for a long time. We are obliged to get up to visit our outposts and pickets, and as there are only two to do the duty, we have to be out four hours, and sometimes more, every night of our lives, and to make it the more agreeable it rains here continually. It is raining dreadfully at the present moment, and in three hours I shall have to mount my horse and ride in the dark over hills that few men would like to face in broad daylight. My interpreter, a young Hungarian, told me the other day, that it was his belief that ‘Der Herr Gott’ had rained stones here at some previous period, for the whole country is one mass of them, large and small.

“My interpreter has just rushed in to say that the whole town is in an uproar, on account of a report which has just arrived, that Sebastopol has fallen. ‘*Credat Judæus,*’ &c. I don't. Sebastopol has been taken so often here, that I have no faith whatever in the report. I have just sent down however to the General, to know if the post has really come in, and if so, to send me up my letters,

as your last was very short, and consisted chiefly of a promise to write more at length next week. I wish the next time you write you would send me something or other good for taking away a cough, as I am rather afraid of mine. I get wet through every night, and sometimes have not time to change for hours, so it will be difficult to get rid of it. I must shut up now, but I shall have lots of news for you by the next post, and a regular history of the siege for R——."

LETTER VIII.

"KARS, *June 24th*, 1855.

"As I think you may perhaps be glad to hear something of our goings on here from an eye-witness, I sit down to write you a short account of our doings, premising, however, that you must not expect much amusement, as I am a notoriously bad hand at letter-writing. We are placed here in a very tenable position, but with a lamentable want of all the necessaries of war. We are very badly off for ammunition, food, and clothing, and our army is in a sad state of discipline. The Russians are encamped on the other side of the valley in our front, about two miles and a half off at most, and are only I think prevented from attacking us by the heavy ground in the valley, caused by the almost incessant

rain we have had for the last ten days. Our communications with our rear are almost entirely cut off, and our last English post was captured by the Russians. General Mouravieff very politely sent us in our private letters; but all newspapers and despatches he has kept, bad luck to him!

“We have here, of all arms, some 18,500 men, many of whom are irregular troops, utterly innocent of all drill and discipline. The Russians have 24,000, but have even more irregulars than we, and theirs are mostly slaves from the Mussulman population of Georgia, who will desert to our side the moment we attack. I have the command of one of the largest forts here, with 3500 men and seventeen guns, and I mean, please God, to hold it. We are very anxious to hear some further news of Sebastopol, as our fate depends very much upon that. There is not a single soldier now between Kars and Constantinople, and we *must* hold the place until the Russians walk into it over our bodies, or the alternative is that we leave an open road to Constantinople, and endanger all the Black Sea forts. However, I hope to come home and show you another medal in addition to my Burmah one, and that will repay me for the hard work of Kars. I have not had a dry thread on me for nearly a fortnight!”

LETTER IX.

“KARS, 29th June, 1855.

“Many thanks for your kind letter, dated June 8th, which I received yesterday. I have written a short note thanking R——, but I will write more fully to him by the next post. The Russians are, I think, marching on Erzeroum, and have very wisely left us alone.

“I have just been feeding my horse, ‘Ginjee,’ (or ‘the Devil,’) with sugar. When I first bought him he was such a brute that no one could go near him, and now he follows me like a dog, and has consequently become my chief favourite. He is a bronze bay in colour, and a very handsome horse; and I hope some day to show him to you, as I fully intend to bring him home with me, if we are both fortunate. He would fetch 200*l.* at home anywhere for a Park horse. I find my Indian knowledge of horse-flesh very useful.

“I am now almost deafened with drums and martial music generally, so will leave off for a while, until I can get a little silence. I wish you would beg, borrow, or steal (don’t buy) a copy of ‘Tristram Shandy,’ and turn over the leaves until you come to the strong opinion pronounced by the Doctor on the unfortunate groom, when he tied the strings

of the Doctor's instrument bag into a knot. I forget the poor groom's name, it is so long since I read that moral work; but change it, whatever it is, into Mouravieff (the Russian General's name), for he won't fight us, and won't go away, and is making himself altogether obnoxious and unpleasant. Tell S—— that if my wound was not received in battle,* I am anxious to know what she considers a battle; as on that occasion we lost two officers, and twenty-seven men killed and wounded. On receiving her answer, I will try and get up a battle according to her definition, and then, perhaps, she will be satisfied. My watch turned out a very good one, and is the best watch here.

I recommend you always to go to Messrs. Jones & Co. of the Strand; I never saw a bad watch of theirs yet, and I have seen many in India. We are going to make a grand demonstration to-morrow morning with our whole force, in order to see what the Russians are about. If they come out to attack us, we are to retreat into the works and open fire on them. If we had 5000 *good* cavalry we could fight them and beat them, but we are deficient in that branch. I hope S—— will bring us some reinforcements from the Crimea, *via* Batoum, which latter place is only five days' march from Kars. I have many Russian trophies for you when I come home, a

* This refers to a wound received in the Burmese War.

sword and rocket case, and numerous other spoils of the slain; but I have *nothing* to write about, so you must forgive all the nonsense I have been scribbling, as Anacreon says :

θέλω λέγειν Ἀτρείδας,
θέλω δὲ Κάδμον ᾄδειν·

but if the Russians won't attack us, and we won't attack them, how can I indulge in warlike strains? So I will shut up, and have my breakfast, and go to sleep, as I have been up and busy all night. Best love to you all, from

"H. L. T."

LETTER X.

"KARS, July 1st, 1855.

"I am going, according to promise, to try and give you some account of our present pleasing predicament. I enclose with this a rough sketch of Kars, which will, I hope, partly explain our position. The battery I am in, the Karadagh, was the scene of the first affair. The cavalry outposts were about two miles in advance of that fort, and early in the morning of, I think, the 16th, we observed the Russians driving in our pickets gradually, to within about a mile of the fort. Shortly afterwards their retrograde movement was changed into a *run*, and we saw the Russian dragoons and Cossacks charge into them, and back they all came, pell mell, under the Kara-

dagh hill, when we opened fire upon them with seventeen guns, and started the Russians back again post-haste. We lost very few, not above twenty-four killed and wounded.

“A few days afterwards the Russians struck their camp at Zaim Keui, and advanced as if to attack. We were all ready for them, but they changed their course, and encamped on some hills in front of Yeni and Fezi Bey batteries, about two miles off, where they still are, sending foraging parties all over the country, to collect supplies from the villages, and wood for fuel. To obtain this latter, they are obliged to pull down the villages, as there is no wood within miles.

It was, I think, the 24th, as I was looking through my glass at the camp, when I saw the Russian army getting under arms. Down they came, soon afterwards, in three divisions, one in front of No. 4,* the centre one in front of Hafiz Pasha (No. 7), and the remaining one down towards the Karadagh. We, of course, immediately beat to quarters, but the Muscovites thought better of it, and retreated after about an hour. Since then they have changed their camp to a mile from their former position, but have attempted no further advance. We hear that Veli

* Referring to a plan, which has unfortunately been lost, but which was very much the same as my own, an almost exact copy of which appeared in Dr. Sandwith's book.

Pasha started to join us from Toprakallé, but that the Russians sent 6000 men to attack him. If this be true—and we have every reason to believe it to be so—poor Veli Pasha and his 5000 men will be cut to pieces to a moral certainty. It is a most melancholy state of things; the Seraskier and authorities at Constantinople appear to care nothing for General Williams' requisitions; we have not siege ammunition for a week. The poor soldiers never get their full rations, and many of them are twenty-eight months in arrears of pay. While such things are going on, it is a wonder to me that the soldiers don't lay down their arms, or desert by thousands; but, strange to say, desertions are very rare, and the men are in the best spirits. I think they are the finest soldiery (or stuff to make soldiers of) that the world can produce. Nothing comes amiss to them; they are literally in *rags*, and yet they never complain, although they are nearly always wet through. It would astonish you to see a regiment of them on parade. You could hardly pick out a worse lot from all the beggars in England.

“Unless we get *English or French* reinforcements in a month or two, you may give up all chance of seeing my beloved countenance again, for there will not be a man of this army left alive. If the Russians don't kill us, we shall die of starvation, which is not by any means a pleasing alternative.

"Our communications are almost entirely cut off, and the country swarms with Cossacks and Armenians (who are all hostile to us). Write me a long letter soon, with nothing but *nonsense* in it, and believe me ever yours, &c. &c.

"H. L. T."

LETTER XI.

"The beleaguered city of Kars, *July 5th*, 1855.

"The enemy has burned all our stores of wheat, biscuit, &c., at Yenikeui, and we shall soon be starving. I have packed up my picture for you, and it starts by the post next Sunday, under cover to R. Let me know if you think it like me.

"I wish the Russians would attack. 'Hope deferred maketh the heart sick,' and my heart is desperately sick of this work. It is such a horrid climate too, as hot as India in the day-time, but the nights very cold, and I am dreadfully fatigued from it. I wish you would send me out 'Westward Ho!' and 'Moredun.' I don't require any newspapers, as I take in two with Zohrab, and so get all the news. What a clean sweep the Allies appear to have made at Kertch! I suppose Sebastopol can't hold out much longer. I wish they would look sharp about it, and then come and help us up here; we need it badly. I want

to spend next winter in Tiflis instead of this inhospitable country."

LETTER XII.

"KARS, *July 15th*, 1855.

"This will, I fear, be a very disjointed sort of epistle, as the enemy is advancing. They have changed their plan of attack, and are now assembling on the south side of our entrenchments. Therefore, I have been placed in charge of the *front* outwork, which is designated Tachmasb Tabia, after some Persian chief, who once made a fort there, when attacking Kars. The Russians are bringing up about 18,000 of all ranks, but I doubt their being about to make an immediate onset. I think it is merely a reconnaissance, and that their object is, to induce us to leave our entrenchments, and hazard a battle on the open plain. If such be the Muscovite expectation they will find themselves mistaken, as we have no intention whatever of leaving our works. If they *do* attack, they *ought* to get a thrashing, but whether they will or not, remains to be proved.

I have just received, as a guest, a small and very emaciated cat, which suddenly appeared from some unknown region, and took up its quarters on my table. I fear it must shortly have its nose dipped in

the ink, if it does not leave off making these insane darts at my pen, to the great detriment of my handwriting, as you may see. Our suspense will soon be over, as the enemy is not more than one hour's march distant, and I hope to have to tell you this evening of our having gained a glorious victory, and of my having *not* fallen, covered with honourable wounds.

"16th.—It is a deception! they are retiring on their camp. This is the fourth time that this has occurred, and I am getting quite tired of it, and begin to wish that I had remained at home with you all, instead of being made a dummy in this abominable country. We shall be starved out in another fortnight, and then we must go out and fight, *or* capitulate, and I don't think any one here thinks of the latter expedient. S. is the lucky one this time; he is sure of some prize-money, and very likely of promotion, while all I can expect or hope for, is to get out of this town with a whole skin.

"19th.—I *can't* finish this! I am disgusted with Russian humanity, and have lost all the skin off my nose with the sun!"

LETTER XIII.

"KARS, 6 A.M. *July 17th*, 1855.

"How this is to reach you I am at present

unaware, the Muscovites having completely surrounded us. We are at present doing 'the whole martyr' in a most refreshing way. I have not had my clothes off for three nights, and have partaken, during some days, of nothing more nutritious than a piece of cold boiled beef;—to the discussion of which, however, I bring, as you may suppose, a very ravenous appetite. I have a tame deer (a gazelle), which I had thought of bringing home; but food is *dear*, and the *deer* is food, and also fat; I fear for his existence, *mais nous verrons*.

“There are various reports of reinforcements, of fabulous extent, coming to us; and I hope sincerely they will bring their own food with them, or they will wish they had stopped away. Our barley for the horses is all out, and my beautiful 'Hafiz,' (or the 'beloved of God,') is looking quite thin, but does his work bravely. They say that 17,000 men are on their march to our relief from Batoum, and 12,000 more from Trebizond; but these are all Bashi-Bazooks, and we are much better off without them, as they will only consume our provender, and run away on the first opportunity. You may imagine what a state this army is in from the following circumstance: Yesterday I ordered my horse to go into the town, and forage for some barley, when my interpreter, who is a lieutenant in the Turkish army, begged to be allowed to remain behind. On my in-

quiring the reason, the poor fellow told me that he had received no pay for eighteen months, and that he owed 400 piastres in the town, and consequently his creditors insulted him on every occasion. Can you imagine such a state of things? I have given him the money, about 3*l.* 4*s.* 0*d.*, and he can now hold up his head. Poor fellow, he is one of the unfortunate Hungarian refugees, and I will try my utmost to get him promoted in his service, and to have his arrears paid up. He is a very hard-working, good young fellow, and does not presume upon my 'Excellency.'

"We had heavy rain all last night; my bedding was wet through, and I was obliged to sleep on the floor, though that was deluged also. It rains here continually, and is piercingly cold at night. I wish the Russians, I am sorry to say, very bad wishes! They have been describing some very interesting and curious manœuvres these last two or three days; and I am continually engaged in examining their movements through a telescope, which amusement I don't find either exciting or pleasant."

LETTER XIV.

"KARS, *July 26th*, 1855.

"As to-day (according to my almanack) is St. Anne's Day, I feel it my duty to commence a letter to you, although I am quite at a loss what to

write about. I think I must invent a sanguinary fight, and tell you of 'knaves in Kendal Green,' and 'rogues in buckram,' whom I have slain, for in reality I am quite without any news. I am up in a battery all by myself; and seldom see any Englishman, except General Williams, who, with his interpreter, always comes up to my advanced post in the morning, to examine the enemy's movements. When they (the enemy) were on the *north* side of us, I was in the advanced battery (the post of honour); but when they marched round to the south side, my battery became nothing, to my great disgust; therefore the good General sent me to *this* battery, where I reign supreme. General Kmety commands the division to which I am attached; and we are as merry as we can be *under the circumstances*. We are very comfortable together, being all good-natured fellows, ready to help one another in every way.

"I will write you a longer letter by next post; but I have so much to do now, that I am too sleepy and tired ever to have much inclination for writing. Tell W—— I count upon his getting my Burmah medal for me from the India House before it goes out, and is perhaps lost altogether. That and the Medjidi will look well together on my green jacket."

LETTER XV.

“KARS, *July 27th*, 1855.

“I only hope we shall manage to keep this vile fastness, and then I shall perhaps be able to get a run over to England in the winter, as the Russians *must* either take the place or retire upon Tiflis on account of the severity of the climate. You have no conception of the cold here in the winter; it is almost always 15° below zero (Reaumur). Impress on the minds of R. and W. very forcibly, that my medal *must* be got from the India House, through Grindlay or otherwise. I shall require it when I am invested with the Medjidi, to show the Turks that we can get medals as well as they.

“I have just been witnessing an animated contest between some Cossacks and some of our gallant cavalry, but as they never came within 500 yards of each other, the combat was not very severe. We have some 3000 Lazis here just arrived; they are mountaineers, armed with a short but very good rifle, and are very brave, but shockingly dirty and insubordinate. They are very anxious to be allowed to attack the Russian camp by themselves. They say they can but die, a man must die once, and it is better to die in battle than to perish with hunger and disease; however, of course they will not be allowed to carry their mad wish into execution.

The summer storms are just beginning here—
such hail I never saw !”

LETTER XVI.

“ KARS, *July 30th*, 1855.

“ You may infer from this large sheet of paper that I am about to scribble vigorously, which is the case. Do you know what I wish my worst enemy ? Nothing more dreadful than a ‘boil’ (horrid word) in the ear ; I am suffering agonies indescribable from one, and heartily wish the whole Russian army were afflicted in like manner. I have got a companion up here now, the General’s Aide-de-camp, a young artillery officer, by name Teesdale.

“ Yesterday I got close to the Russian cavalry (quite by accident) ; I was patrolling, and as I came over a hill-side, I found myself *vis-à-vis* to about 2000 of them ; they were very quiet, so I got off my horse and took out my telescope to examine them more closely, but directly they caught sight of the glass, off started thirty or forty Cossacks to catch me. I accordingly made my bow and ran away nimbly, and the Cossacks found that I could gallop a little quicker than they, so they returned disconsolate without the ‘Inglis Bey.’ Some of the villagers in the neighbourhood have told me, that the Russians are very anxious for them to catch some of us

'Britishers,' and take us to the Russian camp, and that a large reward has been offered for our apprehension. General Mouravieff says he would have taken Kars months ago if it had not been for those tiresome Englishmen, and I verily believe he would. However, I'll take very good care he don't catch *me*, to have the pleasure of shooting me afterwards; but I think he is getting tired of this neighbourhood, and will go away to Gumri again. If he heard of a few English regiments having landed at Trebizond I believe he would take away his army.

"*August 1st.*—This morning we tried to put in practice a dodge to catch some of the Russian cavalry, but they discovered the plan just as it was on the point of succeeding. It was to send out, by night, two battalions of riflemen to line two hills through which a road passes into a large valley about a mile and a half in front of our outposts. I took the command of the rifles, and left camp at about one in the morning, and hid my men quietly among the rocks on the hill. As soon as day dawned 800 Bashi-Bazook cavalry of ours came through the pass, and bravely attacked the Russian cavalry, which was posted on the plain in front. The Muscovites returned their fire, and charged in their turn, when, as preconcerted, our fellows ran away as hard as they could go by the way they

came, but the Russian cavalry would not follow them through the defile, and we lost a glorious opportunity ; if we had once got them through the hills, we could have destroyed them without our losing a man.

“ Here is another post, and no letter, except one from P——, dated Rawal Pindie, 29th of April. Fancy a letter coming all the way from the most northern station in India to England, and from thence to Kars, in less than three months. What wonderful travelling ! My increased rate of pay is not yet settled. If I were paid for the work I do, 5000*l.* a year would not be too much. I am assistant engineer (working), and patrolling officer, with the charge of a battery, and, besides that, have to make myself generally useful. My probable reward will be a bullet somewhere or other, but I am at present as well as I can be and in excellent spirits. I get on (you will be glad to hear) capitally with the General, and he is kind enough to say that he is very well satisfied with my exertions. I believe he thinks me half-mad, for I make him laugh all day long. There never was such a kind-hearted man ! You have no idea what fun goes on in my tent, especially among the flies ; they are quite as great a plague here as they could have been in Egypt ! ”

LETTER XVII.

"KARS, *July 31st*, 1855.

"I have just taken a swim in the Kars river, and the water has washed out of my head all I was going to say; therefore you must be patient. The Russians are still in our front, but have not made any attack. I was out this morning 'taking stock' of them. They little knew how close I was. We have received intelligence that they have burned all our grain and stores, and we have, therefore, only about ten days' provision left, after which time we shall have to try the flavour of cats and dogs. The former I shall partake of with a kind of horrid gusto, having had two pet animals of that species. The flesh of horses is, I believe, highly palatable (when you can't get anything else). One very refreshing fact is, that our Russian friends will be as badly off as ourselves.

"It has just come on to rain very heavily, and the Russian cavalry, who are all out in the plain, will get such a severe ducking. So good bye."

"*July 31.*

"I wish this business was over. I am completely home-sick, which is strange, seeing the long time

I have been a wanderer on the face of the earth. If I ever do get home you won't get rid of me in a hurry.

"I want to know whether the white gate still exists at Wellow, at the bottom of the paddock, where S—— and I used to swing, and whether the three big elm-trees are still alive and green close to the blacksmith's shop. *It was there that the old gipsy woman predicted that S—— was to be an admiral, and that I was to live in king's palaces.* I verily believe that sent him into the Navy.

"How much I should enjoy being with you, but you must write me long letters, remembering that I live upon my supply till the next post comes in, and that every word is interesting. Do not send short lady-like epistles. I have written such long letters, full of nonsense, to E. and G., that I have nothing left to tell you. When anything takes place here, I will immediately send you an account.

"A post is due to-morrow, and I shall not get a wink of sleep to-night for thinking of it. God bless you all!

"H. L. T."

LETTER XVIII.

"KARS, August 7th, 1855.

"I had a good mind not to write to you by this

mail, on account of your shocking conduct; but I suppose I must ascribe it all to the fault of the Embassy at Constantinople, as I do not think you capable of such 'bageness,' as Mrs. Gamp has it. I have exhausted all my news (which is but a very small budget) in my letters to S——, so I cannot write very much this time. I think the Russians are becoming tired of attacking us, and you will be glad to hear that General Williams complimented me very highly last night on my zeal and activity. He is almost worn out, having been up at three in the morning for weeks. It is indeed trying for him, but he has not lost a bit of his energy, and, please God, he will hold Kars to the last.

"What fun we will have when I come home! I intend to bring S—— home with me, if he don't go home before, and we mean to travel through Vienna in company with my dear friend Lake. I have several trophies to bring,—spears, helmets, &c.; but if you don't write to me, I solemnly declare that I will pitch them into the Karstchai, and you shan't have one of them.

"H. L. T."

LETTER XIX.

"KARS, 8th August, 1855.

"I have just visited my pickets, and seen that 'all is well.'

“The Armenian manuscripts you speak of are, I fear, out of my reach, as is also the search after the ark! seeing that I am cooped up in a besieged city, and more anxious about getting my dinner, and doing my work, than about any search after any antiquities. The life here is nearly insupportable, except to a man who has his hands full of work. I verily believe that hard work, and its consequent weariness, are all that keep me alive. It is horrible to me to live in a place where I have not my own way, and cannot take ten or twenty miles' ride every day. Won't I punish your hares and partridges if I have the luck to get home! I'll soon show you that India has not spoilt me as a sportsman.

“The post, just come in, brings news that the Duke of Newcastle is on his way to Trebizond, with a view to visit Kars, and I have written to beg his Grace not to attempt anything so rash. It has taken the post from Erzeroum eleven days to get here, and the Tatar, even then, only got in with great difficulty. It usually takes only a day and a night to get here, and is carried by men who live on horseback and don't know what fatigue is. Unless his Grace comes at the head of an army I don't know how he is to get here. It is impossible to write legibly now, on account of the myriads of flies in my tent; so I will give up the attempt until to-night. I am very much disgusted, *three* posts having come

in, bringing letters for every one else, but not one for me.

“The Russian army, which was detached from the one before Kars, for the purpose of taking Erzeroum, has returned, without having done anything, and we have now about 25,000 men before us, while our force is not above 15,000 strong.”

“August 8th, 1855.

“I send you the list of the Russians killed yesterday, as certified by a deserter. Perhaps Mr. H. would like to see it. It is written by our chef d'état major, a Hungarian general, whose Turkish name is Fezi Bey. We did not lose a man. The Russian cannonade was shameful, most of the shots fell short, and others actually missed the battery—Hurrah !

“8me Aout, 1855.

“Pertes des Russes éprouvés hier, devant Kanli tabia :

“1 général de dragons—Tromtoff.

“16 officiers, entre eux 1 colonel.

“233 soldats.

“Aujourd'hui ils ont renvoyé 50 arabas avec des blessés et des officiers morts, et 233 soldats ont été ensevelis auprès de leur camp.*

“FEYZI.”

* I cannot vouch for the accuracy of this return.—A. L.

LETTER XX.

"KARS, August 9th.

"See what a capital correspondent I am! I only wrote to you yesterday, and begin again to-day. I have sent R—— the sum total of yesterday's slaughter, but the name of the General is incorrectly mentioned. Tell R—— to show it to Mr. H——. It is a hurried transcript from the orders of the day, and was sent to me by General Williams. They say the Russians have attacked Erzeroum, but we are so closely surrounded here that we know nothing for certain. What a jolly drubbing we gave them yesterday! They will think twice before they attack us again. I have not heard from you for so very long that I hardly know what to write about, so I shall conclude for the present.

"I was up early this morning, and saw the Russians digging graves for their slain. Then a regiment of infantry formed up by one of the graves and fired three volleys. A signal rocket has just been sent up from the Russian camp, and a gun fired immediately afterwards (half-past seven, P.M.) Perhaps we shall have some fun to-night, but there is no chance of my being in it, as I am on the wrong side of the works, and shall not be able to leave my post. I am now in the general orders (Turkish) as Commandant of the Karadagh, and

now that I have some real power, I'll show them what a pattern battery is. I have men at work daily, clearing away the stones, and soon we shall have it so clean that you may eat your dinner off the ground. I have two regiments and twelve guns under my command, and consider myself rather a 'swell' than otherwise. I fear our post has been cut off by the Russians, in which case I shall have to wait for a week or more before I hear from you. The Cossacks are all over the country, robbing and plundering the villagers, who are left quite destitute as we cannot give them shelter in Kars, owing to our want of provisions.

"We are now obliged to send out to cut all the unripe corn about the country, to feed our cavalry and artillery horses, and I begin to fear for the lives of my poor little cats, and to wonder how they will agree with me when it comes to the worst. I dare say I have often eaten *cat* before without knowing it, and 'they say' it is uncommonly like rabbit. I hope sincerely 'they' may be right. However, there are abundance of fish in the river, and plenty of horses. The General is much better, but there is a kind of ravenousness about your slave, at breakfast especially, which is rather appalling, and augurs ill for him, in case we get on very short commons.

"I had a present made to me to-day by a Turkish

Pasha,—of what do you think?—a bottle of champagne, and I am going to drink your healths in it to-night, and to give *very little* to my interpreter, as it don't agree with every one, you know. As I rode up to-day the women surrounded me, clasping my knees, and praying, for the love of Allah, that the English Beys would not desert them!—to which I answered, God forbid! and a very good answer it was, seeing that I could not do it if I wished it ever so much. All our communications are cut off, and we have nothing left for it but to harden our hearts and fire away. I only wish somebody was kicking me violently down Regent Street at this moment; I would willingly give him a 10*l.* note as a reward for his exertions, and immediately charter a 'Hansom' for Gloucester Street.

"I must keep this letter open till to-morrow, in case anything happens during the night; so good night to all of you. I am going to drink my champagne, and then tumble into bed till twelve o'clock.

"I resume my scribbling: nothing occurred during the night. I can't make out what the Russians are about. They have more than 30,000 men and won't attack us. The day before yesterday some Cossacks, who were out plundering, came upon a poor little boy who was herding three

calves. They took the calves away from him, and then shot him through the leg because he began to cry. The poor little fellow was brought in here, and the Doctor amputated his leg, but to no purpose, for he died during the night. I wish I could catch those Cossacks, I would have them pinched to death with red-hot pincers. Did you ever hear of such barbarous cruelty?"

LETTER XXI.

"KARS, *August 16th*, 1855.

"Although you are utterly unworthy of my consideration, I have determined to write to you once more, and I hope you will be able to give me a satisfactory reason for your long silence. It is dreadfully hot here now, and a tent is not the coolest of habitations at the best of times. We have nothing at all to do at present, so we amuse ourselves with conjectures as to when the siege will be raised, or if it will be raised at all; and enjoy in imagination the fun we shall have when that happy event takes place. I hope if Sebastopol does fall that they will send us some support, as we can't attack the enemy at present, they being more than twice as strong as we are.

"What would I not give to be driving out to the 'Château d'Arques' with you all instead of being

shut up in this horrid place! What a travelled book that Tennyson of yours is now. It has seen almost all the capitals in Europe,—Dresden, Vienna, Constantinople, London, and Erzeroum; which last, you must know, is the capital of Armenia.

“I have just received a visit from that terror of his enemies and dread of his friends, Ali Hamedji Bey, the chief of about 800 Bashi-Bazooks. He is under my orders, and the General told me to send for him about finding some good spies. I will endeavour to draw his picture for you; I begin with his head-piece, which is composed of a turban made of red and gold silk, very thick, very handsome, and alas! very dirty. Over this is a blue cloth, also very dirty, which looks as if it had been thrown at his head, and had stuck there. He wears a kind of tunic of many colours (dirty again), and a small jacket over that, much embroidered with tarnished lace, baggy blue trousers, and very bad jack-boots, with one rusty spur. However, he is a fine fellow, and very picturesque (at a distance), and as brave as a lion. He is an Arab, and looks down on these effeminate Turks with much scorn. He says that the Arabs and English are brave alone; all the rest of the world are hogs, and eaters of hogs, and he spits upon them. He has got me two spies, and so I say, with great sincerity ‘may your life be long!’ and we salaam, drink coffee, and part; and I

dare say he is hard at work now, on his way home, cursing me for a dirty Giaour, in a most refreshing manner. You must not take him for a pattern of all our Bashi-Bazook chiefs. Some of them are very gentlemanlike men, and dress superbly. One of them, by name Hadji Timera, is a splendid-looking fellow, rides the most beautiful Arab horses, and dresses in the real Bashi-Bazook dress, which is the handsomest I ever saw. *Mem.*—I am going to bring one home with me to wear when I am presented at court.

“Colonel Lake has just come in, and wants me to go out and take some angles, so good-bye for the present. Just as I got home, very hot and very tired, I was beset by five Turkish visitors, who had been sitting here, smoking for the last two hours, to my great annoyance. Luckily Colonel Lake returned with me, and we put them to flight, and then had a long chat together and got gradually cool.

“16th.—Last night, when the orders for the ensuing day came round, I was horrified at seeing that a Turkish Pasha had been put in to command my two batteries, over my head! This was too insulting. I had been put in command of them without solicitation on my part, so down went a letter from me to the General, to know whether he was aware of the insult that had been put upon me. It appears he was not, for about an hour

afterwards I received an apologetic letter from the chef d'état major, informing me that '*it was all a mistake!*' and that the appointment of the Pasha was countermanded. I'm going to make a great row about it to-day, virtuous indignation, and so forth! An attack was confidently predicted for last night, but as it is now nearly four in the morning, and everything quite quiet, I conclude the enemy has again put it off. Three thousand of the enemy's cavalry have come round close under my other battery, but the cunning wretches take very good care to keep out of cannon-shot. I shall try if I can't entice some of them within range to-day, by sending the Bashi-Bazooks out to the front, and letting them fire into the Russian camp, and then run back.

"I made a holiday of the day before yesterday, and, by way of enjoying myself, I took my towels and walked down to the river (which runs close under my battery) and had a good swim, after which I took to fishing, and fished with much assiduity for upwards of four hours, at the end of which time I found that I had caught a very bad headache, and one small, *very* small fish, much resembling a highly emaciated minnow. I don't think I shall go fishing again in a hurry. I have just received the intelligence that one of our posts was cut off yesterday by the Russians;

but whether it was the one which left this, or a coming one, I am not yet aware. Since writing the above, it has turned out a false alarm, being only a small Turkish post of no consequence. The Mushir Pasha has just been up in my battery. He always takes hold of my beard and calls me baba! (son), which makes me highly indignant; but as the old man is very fond of me, and that is his way of expressing it, I am unable to resent it by taking a good pull at his, which I am often much inclined to do. He says he will make whoever tried to turn me out of the command of these batteries eat an unlimited quantity of dirt, and that their parents' graves shall be defiled, which is, of course, highly gratifying to me.

"These Armenians are awful fellows to drink. I went the other day to pay a visit to the bishop of this place at about 10 o'clock in the morning, and found him half through a bottle of something that smelt very like rum, which it afterwards proved to be, as, when tea was brought in, he handed round the rum-bottle in the most amiable manner.

LETTER XXII.

"KARS, *August 18th.*

"I got all your letters yesterday, and am very much obliged for them. I think I know them all

by heart already,—even to the Homœopathic prescription! As you were very particular in your injunctions to me, to take great care of myself, and as I had no cold or cough at the time those two little bottles came out, it struck me that as I am out every night, it would be as well to forestall any malady that might attack me; so I eat all the little pills in both bottles with much relish, thinking it no use ‘to make two bites at a cherry,’ and was proceeding to drink the camphor infusion, which I had prepared, when I found that a young bear I have as a pet had upset the tumbler, and was enjoying himself very much, licking up the remains on the floor. The poor bear was very sick, but I have not felt any of those symptoms of giddiness to which you allude. Don’t tell this to Mrs. D——, or she will think me a perfect savage. I had serious thoughts of eating the bottles as well! I have no pickets to visit to-night, so I will devote it to scribbling to you all. The flies are so dreadfully annoying just now, that I am obliged to stop writing for fear my ink-bottle should be choked up with them, so good-bye till to-night.

“I am in a great rage.—My dinner arrived and apparently had been cooked in the ashes; and I have therefore been compelled to dine upon three eggs, which I happened to have by me.

“8 P.M.—Immediately the bad dinner, to which I

have before alluded, arrived, I wrote down to the General a plaintive appeal against the cook's cruel treatment of me, and I have just received the answer. He begs me, if I can find time, to come down to-morrow, and hear him in strong terms reprimand the cook for his negligence; and in the mean while he has sent me up a very nice piece of corned beef, some cold rice pudding, and some bread and cheese; and your slave has accordingly recovered his good humour. Oh! for some 'ales!!!' XXX preferred!

“We have great difficulty now in sending out our posts at all, we are so surrounded; but the mountaineers know various paths through the hills, and I don't think we have lost many letters. Your fears about my health are quite unfounded. I am in a galloping consumption—of food; but am otherwise very healthy, although I don't get half sleep enough, but I can make up for that after the siege is over. We have two months' more provisions, and can hold out until the end of October, by which time the Russians will be obliged to make themselves scarce on account of the snow; and we can then laugh at them, as their summer campaign will have proved a complete failure, and they will have accomplished nothing, except the robbery of some unfortunate villagers, and that with more than 35,000 men! Good night; I will go on

scribbling after 4 A.M. when I have visited my guards.

“Just as I was writing this, I was startled by hearing the tread of a number of horses coming along my battery. I immediately rushed out and challenged, and found that they were forty Circassian cavalry with a Russian Major at their head, all deserters, who had been sent up for me to employ as I wished. I have ordered them to patrol to the front, and bring me in intelligence of the enemy's movements in the morning. They are all irregular horsemen, who were pressed into the Russian Service last year, and being good Mussulmen they deserted to our side. I gave their commander pipes and coffee, and his orders, and he is off. I don't want anything at all, thank you, and if you send me out a respirator, as you threaten, I will put it on my bear, and try his lungs daily with the Doctor's stethoscope; and green or blue spectacles shall also be used for his benefit. He (the bear) is a much more intelligent animal than most of the Turks here, and I am thinking of applying for him to be made colonel of a regiment.

“I have no more nonsense to scribble; but if you really want a grievance, or an anxiety of any kind about my health, let me know. Our Doctor has a book with some awful hard words in it, which I will consult, and send you home such a string of

dreadful diseases, that you will be sending me out Homœopathic medicines in quart bottles. In sober earnest I never was in better health in my life, and, please God, I mean to continue so. Adieu."

LETTER XXIII.

"KARS, midnight, *August 18th*, 1855.

"A thousand thanks for all your delightful letters. Writing to you seems almost like talking to you. I wish you had been by my side this afternoon. I went fishing, and caught a number of roach and dace, and two trout. To-morrow I am going to try fly-fishing for an hour or two, and see if I can get anything. The river is close under my battery, and therefore very handy.

"I think I told you in my last letter of having had a Russian (deserter) major and forty men sent up to me here yesterday. I had observed a lot of Russian cavalry busily engaged cutting a field of corn, about two miles or more from my battery, and I observed that they loaded their horses in the evening and returned to their camp, leaving a very pretty stock of ripe corn ready cut, and sheaved, which they evidently intended to come and take away the next morning; so when the above-mentioned major came for his orders, I told him to patrol from one in the morning till three, and then

to ride quietly up to this field before daylight, seize the corn, put it on his horses, and bring it in (of course, supposing that no Russians were about). He managed it beautifully, loaded his own and all his troopers' horses with it, and brought it to me almost before daylight. I waited some two hours, and then I saw some sixty or seventy Russian cavalry leave their camp and proceed direct to the field in question, which was not far from a village (deserted, of course). When they arrived at the field, and found their corn gone, they immediately set to work, galloping all over the surrounding country, but no corn was to be seen, and so off they dashed into the village, thinking, perhaps, it might be concealed there. But no—no corn was to be found, and they had their journey for nothing. There has been a great laugh through the camp all day about this 'sell,' and the old Mushir was in ecstasies when I told him how I had tricked the Giaours.

“Sunday afternoon.

“Glorious victory! One hundred and ten Russians killed, and 'various wounded.' Again is the Karadagh distinguished. My Bashi-Bazooks drove back a regiment of Cossacks in the most gallant manner; but I have no time to tell you the story, as I have only two hours' sleep before me, and

I have my reports to make before going to bed.
More news to-morrow.

“4 A.M. 21st.

“After visiting my pickets I had just fallen into a delicious sleep when I was awakened by hearing musketry from the outposts to the right of my battery. I jumped out of bed and ran out (we all sleep in our clothes), and found—nothing! Wasn't I angry? and here I am, sitting writing to you, and waiting for daylight, instead of being asleep, as I ought to be.

“One of the Polish officers here says that he has had a letter from the Belgian ambassador at Constantinople, who tells him that Omar Pasha's army is on its way to Batoum, to create a diversion in our favour. I don't believe it. However, somebody must be coming to our relief, for I don't believe even Turks would be so utterly lost to their own interest as to suffer so important a place as this to be taken without (at all events) trying to relieve it.

“Now, good night. The outposts must have seen a donkey, or a cow, or some other 'savage' animal of the kind.

“I wish you would send me a large bottle of your favourite globules, to kill flies with;—if they would do that, they would really be useful. I actually

long for the winter, if it were only to get rid of these pests.

"H. L. T."

LETTER XXIV.

"KARS, August 25th, 1855. 3 A.M.

"Our life here still goes on very monotonously. You wish to hear something about the siege, and express a desire that I should not be *unnecessarily brave*. Know, then, that we are behind earthen works, and that our bravery *can* only be displayed in activity and energy, and in stopping out of bed at nights, which last is most unpleasant; but I find it a good time for writing letters, or I should not be scribbling nonsense to you at this early hour of the morning. The only danger we have to fear is, that of being starved to death, which is certainly not a very attractive prospect. Four rockets have just been fired off by the Russian pickets, which denotes that something is up. I expect it is a convoy of grain or bread coming to them from Gumri, but it is as yet too dark to see anything, so I will continue scribbling.

"If you have ever been in Greenwich Park, and seen the Pensioners with their telescopes for hire, you can form some idea of my duties here. I am expected to see everything that goes on, even if it is behind the mountains, and have, besides, to look

after two large batteries, mounting twelve or fourteen guns each, manned by seven battalions, and without an efficient officer. I am looked up to as a miracle of wisdom, because I can read the parole when it comes up at night, written in the Turkish character, which is very similar to the Persian. One of my officers asked me, the other day, quite seriously, 'Can the English speak every language except Turkish?' He had heard me speaking to a Frenchman and a German just before, and, I fancy, drew rather unwise conclusions from those displays of my power. It is, perhaps, as well that he did not understand the two latter languages himself, as I don't speak them quite so grammatically as I might and ought to have done.

"You will hear and see a great deal more about the siege of Kars than I possibly can tell you, as a good deal more fighting goes on in the papers than here! but if anything really does occur, you shall have every particular, 'without malice.'

"Do send me some writing-paper, I implore you, and I will pray for your prosperity evermore. My candle is just beginning to burn down, and day is breaking, so I shall have a good look round with the telescope, and then, if all is quiet, sleep till I am awakened by my friends the flies, who begin at an early hour to worry me sadly. I don't think I have any more to say now, so good-bye.

LETTER XXV.

" KARS, August 27th, 1855.

" If you happen to hear of a very affectionate son being required in a most respectable family, I wish you would directly answer the advertisement, and state that your beloved son is fully qualified, as he has written innumerable letters to your address, none of which have as yet been answered. I am sorry to be obliged to complain thus often of your non-performance of your repeated promises; but at last I *must* express my wrath and indignation. There is no danger attendant on the departure of *your* penny post, and as often as you despatch it I am sure to receive it, for your letters are not intercepted, and I don't think any of mine have been. I have several parcels waiting for me at Constantinople, but my agent there tells me, it would not be safe to send them on, as they would be sure to steal them between Trebizond and Erzeroum, and then throw the blame on the Russians. I sent out to Smith and Elder for various Magazines and Army Lists, &c., and they are all in Constantinople. I suppose I shall get them in time to read on the voyage home, if I don't have to travel the other way.

" We have now been fourteen weeks invested,

and the Russians are not nearly so sure of taking Kars as they were at first. We have plenty to eat till help arrives, and if the snow will only come down a little earlier than last year, we may laugh at the beards of the Russians. It is dreadfully monotonous, and the work is the only thing that keeps one alive. I have read every thing readable in Kars about twenty times over."

LETTER XXVI.

"KARS, *August 26th*, 1855.

"I hope you get all my letters, for I write to you almost every day; you must be quite tired of my numerous despatches: however, I intend to scribble on till you cry 'enough.'

"I am afraid I shall not be able to come home to S——'s wedding, as I shall probably by that time be serving the Russians in the mining department somewhere in Siberia and receiving no pay. I am nearly knocked up with over-work now, but there's a good time coming, I hope.

"I have just had a visit from a Turkish Major on the staff, who has spent sixteen years of his very eventful life in France and England. He much deplores the demoralised state of things in this country, and is very anxious that the English policy should be adopted in Turkey, in which case,

he says, they would have the finest army in the world, which I can readily believe.

“I must stop here, for I have a very horrid punishment to witness—viz. that of flogging a deserter, and I very much wish it was over. Poor wretch! he has got it, and it serves him right too, but I would sooner have lost my right hand than have stood in a Mussulman camp and have been the ostensible cause of so dreadful a punishment. I hope it will have a good effect, and that desertions will not be so frequent. This morning we have had some smart skirmishing between the Russian cavalry and these outposts. I have not yet heard the amount of killed and wounded. The poor fellow who was flogged yesterday is doing well. I have succeeded in getting some ice for his unfortunate wounds, and hope he will recover. The Turkish soldiers say, that I can't be a very brave man, as I turned my back to the prisoner at the time his punishment was going on. We shall see!

“I hope to get some letters from home to-day or to-morrow. I know all that I have hitherto received by heart, and have adopted your plan of writing something every day; you wished it, and it will show you that I am anxious to obey the commands of my superior officer.

“I have a soldier servant here of great ability, who provides for all my wants, washes and mends

my clothes, and takes almost as much care of me as you could do. He is such a dear old fellow, but rather curious on some points. He reprimands me severely whenever I don't feel hungry and don't eat all my dinner; and if I give sixpence to a beggar, he immediately abuses the man and his relations, tells him that he should turn soldier, and that then he would not require to beg from an English Bey who has come out to fight for his 'Padisha' and religion, and who himself receives no pay from the Sultan, and dismisses the poor fellow with an injunction not to show his face in front of my tent again.

"H. L. T."

LETTER XXVII.

"KARS, *August 30th*, 1855.

"Here we are still going on in the same monotonous way as ever. A few cavalry skirmishes now and then, and a surprise at night, is all we have to amuse us. I wish the Russians would attack us, if it was only to give me something to write to you about.

"The sun has gone down, and those vindictive flies are asleep, so I can now manage to write in comfort. I have had such fun this evening, when the majors and lieutenant-colonels came to my tent

to get their night orders and have their coffee and pipes. I took the two stoutest and trussed them for cock-fighting. Perhaps you may not have seen the game (but R. can show you); and then I set them to work, and the funny old fellows rolled about the tent, and nearly cried with laughing. I never saw such fun. At last I was obliged to allow myself to be tied up and trussed too, although it hurt my poor arm a good deal, and I charged and upset a fat 'Kaimakan' or lieutenant-colonel, and rolled him over and over. I wonder what the Mushir would think if he were to hear of such enormities.

"I shall go to bed for an hour or two till the moon gets up. So good-bye till to-morrow.

"H. L. T."

LETTER XXVIII.

"KARS, August 31st, 1855."

"We hear nothing of reinforcements having arrived, and I suppose we shall be sacrificed to Turkish imbecility and English procrastination, which are long and expressive words.

"I made a glorious salad yesterday out of an old cabbage, which was eaten with much relish. That little cookery-book which E—— gave me has been of immense service. My breakfast has been

just sent away untouched, being of too disgusting a description for even a hungry man to eat. The rice was intermingled with small stones about as big as swan-shot, and the meat and eggs were so highly oleaginous and dusty that they had been cooked I suppose upon the kitchen-floor.

“I am prepared then to come forward with the following sums, viz., to any party who will bring me two pounds of Dieppe *charcuterie* (Turkey, with truffles of course, preferred), but pork not objected to, 10*l.* 10*s.*; and to any party bringing me two quarts of good bitter beer or ale, 5*l.* Oh! for some bread and cheese. I find it hard to have to labour day and night when I don't get enough to eat. In India, when you are with your regiment, no matter where, you are sure of your breakfast, dinner, and tiffin, to say nothing of good beer; and here, almost in civilised Europe, you can get nothing. The Turks eat a composition of meat, eggs, and assafœtida, combined with onions and sweetmeats and dirt, that I cannot stand.

“The General is ailing, but is lifted on his horse, and is as active as ever. He does indeed set us an example. Lake and I continue to do our best to knock up ourselves and our horses, but, thank God, we can't manage to succeed.

“Two regiments of Russian cavalry have just been trying to catch some of our cattle which were grazing ‘out of bounds,’ but I saw the Muscovites leaving their camp, and sent up a smoke-ball as a signal for the cattle to be brought under shelter of the guns—and they were sold! Two hours afterwards they again attempted the same thing, with no better success, but this time we sent several round-shot into the midst of them, and they must, I think, have lost some thirty or forty soldiers and horses. They in return captured some twelve or fourteen old villagers who were tending cattle, and a few donkeys.

“You can’t imagine how disgusting it is to have anything to do with these Turks; I have just now had to place a lieutenant-colonel under arrest for insubordination. An order came up from the chef d’état major, that I should immediately send from the troops under my command four companies of infantry, to hold another battery which was weak in numbers. I got my own men ready and sent to the lieutenant-colonel commanding my other battery, telling him to send two companies at once. He sent me a message of which I did not approve, upon which I immediately ordered him up to explain himself. He sent yet again to say he was ill; upon which I mounted my horse to see how matters stood, and found him on the floor

of his tent in a most agreeable state of inebriation. This was about 8 P.M. I took the liberty of abusing him well, and ordered him to be put to bed by one of the common soldiers, and am now waiting for orders what to do with him.

“If our General of generals had not been here, I wonder how long Kars would have stood out against the Russ !

“I am writing to you by little bits, so my letters must necessarily be disjointed epistles. I have had news that a great huge brass thirty-two-pounder is to be sent up into my battery to-night, and I am hard at work making a platform ready to receive it before morning, as we don't want the enemy to see us at work. God help their cavalry if they come this way after to-morrow. I am so sleepy and tired, but I can't go to bed till this job is finished.

“Half-past twelve at night, and the gun has not arrived, but I hear it coming, and then won't I sleep till I am knocked out of bed by those delightful flies !

“H. L. T.”

LETTER XXIX.

“KARS, *September 1st, 1855.*

“I wish the winter would come on a little more rapidly. It is dreadfully slow here. I can't leave

my battery for more than an hour at any time; and in another month my horses will be all skin and bone, if not dead, for they have not tasted a grain of corn for the last six weeks. I want to send one of them to Trebizond for the Duke of Newcastle to ride when he arrives, but I do not like to start it until I know whether he is coming or not. I have written to Trebizond begging him not to attempt Kars at present.

“We have received intelligence to-day that Omar Pasha, at the head of a large army, is about to land at Batoum. When I see him and his army, I will believe it! The Turks say, ‘It must be true because an Englishman has written it,’ which I take to be a great compliment to the veracity of our countrymen. They say that the French and the Russians are the fathers of lies, but that an English private soldier will always speak the truth, although he gets drunk and abusive at times. While I was at Constantinople I do not think I saw more than three English soldiers tipsy, whilst I saw hundreds of ‘foreigners’ rolling about the streets.

“I have been trying for this last half-hour to light my pipe by means of a flint and steel. It is blowing very hard and is so bitterly cold I do not like to call any of the servants out. After knocking all the skin off my knuckles, I have at

last succeeded. I have here two servants and a trumpeter, all soldiers, and better servants no man could have, and they cost me exactly—nothing, *per mensem*. The only 'slaves' I have to give wages to are my grooms. I have only to utter the magic word '*gel*' (come), and a man instantly presents himself at the door of my tent. My head servant, '*Kadri*' by name, swears he will never leave me, and is determined to return to England with me. He is a faithful fellow. My interpreter delights in making derogatory remarks concerning me in the hearing of the said Kadri, who immediately pulls out his rifle sword (bayonet), and woe betide him who comes in his way. The other morning he absented himself for the greater part of the day, and I discovered that he was in prison for having beaten a gardener because he had no salad (for sale) for my dinner. I got him released, and his first words were, 'I will take my rifle next time and shoot him if he sells his salads before I come.' I have had a very good salad every day since, and I am of opinion that Kadri's '*argumentum ad baculum*' is the best after all. I am going to bed now, so good-night to you all.

"The Russians have just sent back some prisoners, whom they had taken long ago and sent to Gumri. Their stratagem is very apparent. They have sent them back to give us so many more

H

mouths to feed ; but we have a good deal more provision than they give us credit for. The returned prisoners say they have been employed in working on new fortifications at Gumri.

“I dream of getting letters every night, and each orderly who comes is attacked by Kadri to know if he has any letters for the master. I have promised twenty piastres' reward to any one who brings me a letter, and the zeal with which my fellows look out is very amusing.

“The prisoners say that the Russians have painted all the guns in Gumri black, as mourning for the loss of Sebastopol. These Turks are such simple souls, that I verily believe if you were to tell them that London had been removed to India, they would believe you. One of them asked me the other day whether Ireland was not in France, and said he had heard that there were cannibals in some part of that country. I have just had some Russian shells brought in, which had not exploded.

“Begging you all to pity my forlorn state without books, sport, or amusement of any kind, believe me, &c.”

LETTER XXX.

“KARS, *September 4th*, 1855.

“I had just commenced this letter when the candle went out, which I hope will not be a bad

omen and procure you a more than usually stupid epistle. I have just got rid of my orders for the night, and swallowed my *delicious* dinner. I feel rather hungry yet, but one can't expect everything of the best in a besieged town, so I shall smoke my pipe complacently and go to bed till 1 A.M., when I shall get up and have a cup of hot coffee. One thing consoles me for the short commons here; there is no commissariat *salt pork* (nauseous stuff) in Turkey, and what meat we *get* is fresh.

“Our missing post has not come in, and my last letter was the one that brought the pencil-case. I am afraid we have no chance of getting another till the winter, and that the Muscovites will have the satisfaction of reading all your letters instead of me. Some prisoners, who came in from Gumri the other day, stated that Sebastopol had fallen, and that the Russians had painted their siege guns *black* in consequence; it never struck them that iron guns are always blackened, partly to keep them from corroding, and partly to prevent their being too plainly seen. But all the Turks believed it for a time. I have a revolver which was made me a present here, so therefore I must decline with many thanks your offer of sending me another.

“There is a little book called, I think, Redhouse's '*Vade Mecum*' for officers in Turkey; it is just

published, and costs sixpence; it is only about four inches long by two broad, and I wish you would send it out to me by the next opportunity. It is a great help to a man learning Turkish, in which language I am gradually beginning to make myself understood. What a blessing that copy of Shakespeare, which you gave me, has proved! I have had nothing but that and S——'s Tennyson, and your letters, to read for a long time.

“We have a report here that General Mouravieff has been superseded, but I have become a disbeliever in anything which I don't see with my very own eyes, so I shall continue not to credit it until I have the pleasure of meeting him in St. Petersburg or Tiflis. I have just served a soldier out nicely in his own coin,—‘*suo sibi gladio*,’ as we used to say at Eton. He had shamefully overloaded a poor, half-starved pack-horse, and because the unfortunate beast very naturally tumbled down, he began to kick and beat him most unmercifully. I took a mild bit of a stick, and went and accosted the brute, asking him how *he* would like to be treated in the same way. He said he was not a horse but a man; so I told him he was a ‘beast’ and no man, and proceeded to behave to him precisely as he had to the horse. As soon as I conceived he was black and blue I desisted, and ordered him to be placed on a *small* allowance of bread and water *per diem*.

All these savage humours arise from a disordered state of the digestive organs, and a little low diet will prove invaluable.

“I have been all day trying to solve one of the chess problems from the *Illustrated London News* on a piece of paper, with little cards, with knight, pawn, &c. written on them, and find I haven't got it yet. I hate chess usually, so it will show you how little I have to amuse myself with. I don't mean this as a hint to you to send me out a chess-board, for if you did it would never reach me; and if it did arrive I should never play upon it, seeing that it requires two people, and I can't cut myself in half; and lastly I have a great abhorrence of the game. Tell W—— if he will send me one or two good strong pipes (short), I shall be grateful. I have lots of 'baccy,' but no pipe, except a Turkish one, and you can't smoke English tobacco in that, it would be too strong.

“I am beginning, like Tennyson's 'Lotos-Eaters' to—

‘Hearken what the inner spirit sings,

“There is no joy but calm!”

Why should we only toil?’

Why should we? and why have no amusements? Why is there no theatre or opera—and why are there no balls and parties at Kars?

“The Russian cavalry has again been patrolling

in our front to-day, but took very good care to keep out of shot of our big guns. A sergeant, belonging to the regiment of cavalry which we sent away the other night, found his horse was too weak to go on with him, so he was obliged to dismount and hide amongst the stones; he came in last night after having been three days without food. I am afraid the Russians have got hold of many of them, as their horses were very weak. This morning there is a large Russian convoy passing along the hill-side in front of Kars. Oh for a couple of good English cavalry regiments!—wouldn't we give it to them?"

LETTER XXXI.

"KARS, September 7th.

"I have just finished a letter to —, and as I always like to have some one to keep scribbling to, I immediately commence another to you.

"My only expenses here are, my servant's food (as the Government feeds me), my 'baccy,' and my horse expenses, which are by no means light. Barley being at famine price, and very difficult to get at all, none of my horses have tasted anything but chopped straw and water for more than two months, and you may imagine that to be no very fattening diet.

"I have just been sleeping and dreaming. I

dreamt that Kars was attacked, and that we thrashed the Russians well, and that General Williams sent me with despatches to General Simpson in the Crimea, and I awoke up just as I was taking a glass of grog with S—— in the advanced trenches, and lo ! it was all a dream. *Eheu!* The worst of it was that I dreamt that I was twice wounded, and I suffered all the pain of the wounds in my dream. I had a tumble to-day. I was in a great hurry to go over to the other battery, so I took the first horse that came to hand ; he was a wretched animal belonging to one of my cavalry troopers. I went off at a gallop, and before he had gone twenty yards he put his foot on a stone, and over and over he went. I was picked up by some soldiers, who wanted to carry me home. But though very much bruised, I mounted again and went on. My horses gallop over the rocks and stones as if they were the finest turf, and I imagined this unfortunate brute would do the same, but I was deceived. There is a report of a post having arrived. I have sent a man down full gallop to know if the news is true, but I fear it is not. Alas ! a post has arrived, but without a single letter for me.

“We have news from the Crimea that another great battle has been fought on the Tchernaya, and that the Russians have been again well beaten ; also that Omar Pasha is arriving at Trebizond with 20,000 men to our relief. He must be here in a

month at latest, and we can hold out for three months more if required. I have heard none of the particulars of the fight before Sebastopol, as I am a miserable exile up here, and they don't even send me up my newspapers till they have read them down below at the house. A quantity of rain fell last night, and the weather is sensibly colder. The flies are beginning to perish in the most resigned and amiable manner too, which makes dwelling in tents much more pleasant. I enclose you a little wild pink which I picked in my tent; all our English wild flowers grow here in great profusion, but I can't go out to get any roots or bulbs, as M—— desired me. If Omar Pasha makes haste, I may be able still to get some before winter sets in; but the Consul at Erzeroum, who is a great naturalist, tells me, that this and next month are the only times you can take up the bulbs with any chance of their reaching England alive."

LETTER XXXII.

"KARS, September 7th, 1855.

"I have just finished a letter to that small 'party' M——, inquiring about some songs I wrote to her for, and have never received, when 'pop goes' the roar of four cannons. I rush out in the light and airy costume of a shirt and a pair of night drawers, and discover three regiments of Cossacks, and a

battery of guns firing away at about twenty of our cavalry who are peaceably cutting grass for their horses. Our cavalry, *of course*, run away, and I send out some Bashi-Bazooks to look for the cannon-balls which the Russians have so pleasantly thrown away, and which fit some of my guns very conveniently. I give a certain sum for each cannon-ball or unexploded shell which is brought in to me, in addition to the reward given by the Turkish government, and I have recovered numbers. As an instance:—out of six round shot I fired the day before yesterday I have recovered five, all of which are serviceable, and will, I hope, plough into the Russian columns on some future occasion.

“I am so longing for letters from you all; but our communications are almost entirely cut off, and the stupid Pasha at Olti won't send our letters on for fear of their being taken by the enemy, although three or four Turkish posts have arrived intact. A Russian dragoon deserted to us to-day, and states that the day before yesterday the news of a great battle having been fought near Sebastopol was read to the Russian troops. He says that the loss on both sides was stated to have been immense, but that neither gained the victory; from which I infer that we gave the Muscovite a thorough good beating, and I only wish we had a few more troops to enable us to manage here.

“My cats have, I fancy, discovered my horrible intentions towards them, for they stedfastly refuse to get plump and fat; however, eaten they will be, fat or thin,—that’s certain.

“General Kmety has found three bottles of a rather sour species of *vin ordinaire* in one of his boxes, and has sent me up a bottle as a great treat; so I drink all your healths first, and his afterwards. You may imagine the sociability of our life up here, when I tell you that I have not seen him for nearly a month, as we cannot leave our batteries on any account.

“Our General rode up to see me yesterday, as he had heard I was not well; it was the first time I had seen him for some days. However, I had nothing the matter but a little sickness, caused by catching cold on picquet-duty, and I am all right again now.

“I am obliged to be always on duty now, and always necessarily in uniform, as an example to the slovenly Turks, whom I always pull up roundly when I see them improperly dressed or going about without their swords.

“All has been quiet during the night, and I have not heard of any desertions.

“I have been obliged to send my interpreter down to the hospital. He was playing with one of my horses, and got a kick on the jaw, which knocked

half his teeth down his throat, and has caused his face to swell a good deal. I gave him several of your little white drops, but they, strange to say, had no effect. I have also administered several to the soldiers, who admire the style of medicine much, though I have not hitherto perceived that any actual benefit has been derived from it, but that is probably to be attributed to prejudice on my part.

“I am longing to hear something definite about this rumour of the fight in the Crimea. Of course, if it was not an actual attack on Sebastopol, S—— could have had no share in it. I think he ought to be safe for his commandership now. I wish I was with him in the Crimea, this work is so horribly slow. However, as we used to write in our copy-books as children, ‘Patience and Perseverance conquer all things.’

“I have just been out to my observatory, and had a good look round. I can only see one patrol of about eight men moving to my front, and all is still quiet in the Russian camp. It would do E. and G. a great deal of good to come and live on the Kara-dagh for a month or two, to teach them the blessings of early rising. I generally go to bed about half past seven, sleep till twelve, get up till two or three, and then take an hour's nap in my clothes, and up again for the day. I don't find it disagrees with my health a bit; we are ‘as well as can be expected.’

“Lieutenant Kocq, who breakfasted here, has been amusing me with the most extraordinary accounts of the luxury and gaiety of Tiflis, till I almost wish I was a prisoner there. God knows there is little enough gaiety *here*, except what one carries about in one's own heart.”

LETTER XXXIII.

“KARS, *September 9th*, 1855.

“Only fancy, we woke up this morning after a most bitterly cold night, and found that the Russian camp was a foot deep in snow, and, strange to say, we had none. I had a dreadful night of it; it was blowing dust into my tent in pecks, and was so bitterly cold that I could not sleep; I therefore smoked, and walked about the greater part of the night. It is so cold this morning that I can hardly hold the pen in my hand, and, thank Heaven, the flies are all dead.

“In another week we shall see Master Russ packing up to go away and receive Omar Pasha somewhere about Tiflis, and then won't we enjoy ourselves! My hair and beard were this morning full of fine black dust, and the sheets on my bed were begrimed with it. My eyes are still quite sore from it. I think we are going to have an early winter, which will soon send the Muscovites away. The cold has taken me quite by surprise. Yesterday was as hot a day as I ever remember in England; I had the sides

of my tent up, to allow the breeze to come in. In the evening it began to blow, and this morning it is so cold that I should be very happy to sit by a fire. The Russian camp looks so miserable all among the snow on the hill-side.

“My only amusement is writing to you, and smoking *tchibouques*, and reading all your old letters over and over again. Every letter I received from you since 1845 is safe in my little desk.

“The Russian cavalry have been down in my front to-day, and I sent a round shot slap into the middle of them. I saw four horses going back to their reserve directly afterwards, so I conclude it must have done some mischief. They charged down, and gallantly captured four poor worn-out old horses that had been sent out of our lines for being useless, and one of these got away from them. We have either shot or otherwise got rid of all our useless cattle, and the Russ is quite welcome to take what can be found astray. My hands are so intolerably cold that I must leave off till the sun comes out and infuses some life into me.

“Last night, about ten or eleven o'clock, I was walking up and down to keep myself warm, when suddenly the whole country in front of the Karadagh appeared lighted up, and I saw that the Muscovite was at his deadly, unmanly work, burning the corn, lest our foragers should get it. It gives one comfort,

to think that it must be a sign of their approaching departure. '*Fama volat*' that General Mouravieff is superseded by General Lüders, who commanded a division in the Crimea. I do not think Lüders could make a better business of it than Mouravieff has done. No one could have stopped our communications better or placed us in a more effectual state of blockade than Mouravieff. However, wait a while till Omar Pasha really does come, and then you may kill the fatted calf as soon as you please.

"The only way I can manage to keep my hands at all warm, is by keeping them everlastingly in my pocket. It is *much* colder on this hill now, this 10th September, than it was any time during the winter of last year, even in London. It froze hard all last night, and it is freezing now.

"8 A.M.—I am making myself up an enormous great-coat, to be all lined with white fox skin, and it is expected to be *rather* a superior article for winter wear. The Russian Cossacks have all commenced their winter clothing, and they look like so many bears on horseback. We have to-day disbanded the regiment from which we had so many deserters, and given the remainder of the men over to different regiments, with strict orders to look well after them. What are those fellows over the way about? They sent a large force off in the dead of the night towards Erzeroum. They are foolish to burn the corn, be-

cause they simply cut their own throats by it. They require an immense store to keep their enormous cavalry force in working order; and, if they think to starve us out by such work, they are much mistaken, as they will shortly discover.

“If the Russians do mean to spend their Christmas with us, we shall have our horses to eat; and we have no idea of surrendering on any terms. However, my opinion is, that we have seen nearly the last of them; and may Omar Pasha catch them on the road when they leave us!

“The cannon-shot from this battery the day before yesterday slaughtered two Russian dragoons. This we hear from a deserter from the regiment.

“My tent has been thronged with visitors all day to see the burning fields.

“H. L. T.”

LETTER XXXIV.

“KARS, *September 12th, 1855.*

“The Russians burned some fields of corn yesterday; and, as there was a good strong wind blowing, the fire extended all over the country. One high hill, or mountain, was completely covered with flame, and looked, as you may imagine, very grand at night. We are quite without military news; everything is in a state of stagnation with us; so I don't know what to write about. I can't help thinking

that there must be a post, as my messenger is so long in returning. There are some Russian covered carts going along the hill-side towards Gumri, and our men will have it that there has been a fight near Erzeroum, and that these are the wounded men, as the carts are moving very slowly, and are halted every now and then.

“The water in my basin was frozen this morning, and it is very cold at night. I am looking through the telescope all day, to see if the Muscovites are making any preparations for a start.

“I have just arrived from my other battery, and can't speak for hoarseness. I am grieved to be obliged to state that I have been reviling for the last two hours, in English, German, Hindustani, and Turkish, like a trooper. The Russian cavalry came down in front of Arab Tabia, and every man was immediately out on the breastwork, in spite of my repeated orders to the contrary. The consequence is, that my nice fortifications, which I take such pride in keeping clean, are all trodden down and broken.”

LETTER XXXV.

“KARS, *September 13th*, 1855.

“The Russians appear to be quiet to-day, and I fancy they must be very *happy*, as they received a large convoy yesterday, and there was probably a

good supply of champagne for the generals, and Donskoi wine and schnaps for the officers and men.

“We ought to get a good deal of κûdos for the siege if we manage to hold Kars until we are relieved.

“Nothing is done without the General. He is *de facto* Commander-in-Chief, and we come next to him in point of responsibility and hard work. The Turkish pashas sit in their tents all day, perspiring and smoking, and we are out all day, and night. It is very fagging work, but we have to remember that we are Englishmen, and with the example of *our* Pasha we are not likely to forget it.

“My scribbling was stopped by seeing about 200 Cossacks coming across the plain at a gallop to cut off our foragers. They have been rather too fond of this lately, and once or twice have been more successful than they ought to have been. However, I made last night some small rifle-pits, and sent the men down to them among the rocks under the Karadagh. Our foragers were desired to run under the rocks for safety, and the Cossacks followed them, thinking they had not been seen, when, pop, pop, went the rifles, and over tumbled some Cossacks, while the rest galloped away. We presented then them with a couple of rounds of

grape as a parting gift, but they were already too far off for it to take effect.

"H. L. T."

"I have been trying to out-manceuvre the weather by putting one tent over another to keep the cold out at night. In the month of June I managed to ward off the rain in that way; and as mine was thus a dry tent, the Pashas drank my coffee and smoked my pipes to my infinite delight, for I don't like solitude. The Turkish soldiers are good fellows, and will do anything for you if you are kind to them. They once saw me gathering some wild pinks, which I put into a letter to send home, and I seldom saw the table in my tent afterwards without an offering of wild flowers from some of them.

"The wind changed to north-west by west, as the sailors say, last night, and it has set in even colder than before. The Turks say we shall have more snow ere long; but it is still very hot during the day.

"Oh for a regiment of Sepoys! I would vanquish the whole Turkish army with them; and yet these good fellows fight very well behind entrenchments; they are quite as good and brave men as the Russians.

"My time is continually taken up by reports of

the advance of Russian cavalry, and I am continually rushing out of my tent to send up signals for the retreat of our foragers.

“The General is purchasing wood for the winter stock, which looks very ominous for some unfortunate ‘party’ among us. I hope it will not be my fate to stay the winter here.

“The Russians are still hard at work burning all the grass and corn. If they were going to remain the winter, I think it would be more prudent were they to cut and stack it.

“At this present moment our Bashi-Bazooks are popping away with the Russians, but they do not seem to do much damage on either side.”

LETTER XXXVI.

“KARS, *September 23rd*, 1855.

“Three cheers! We have just heard of the taking of Sebastopol, and are going to fire a royal salute at mid-day, and another at 6 P.M. The news was brought to us very cleverly by a Bashi-Bazook chief, who had ten men with him. He rode close up to the Russian cavalry videttes—he speaks Russian—and when they challenged him, he answered, ‘Hold your tongues, you fools! don’t you hear the Colonel coming?’ and in a moment he dashed past them, and

succeeded in reaching Kars. The joy in camp is immense, and we are more than ever determined that the Russians shall not have Kars. The old Mushir was in high spirits, and decorated the Bashi-Bazook this morning. I suppose the Allies will now march upon Simpheropol.

“Omar Pasha seems really to have landed at Batoum with 40,000 men, but as yet we have not been able to communicate with him, we are surrounded by such a cordon of videttes.”

LETTER XXXVII.

“KARS, *September 28th*, 1855.

“My health has suffered somewhat from the hard work and confinement of the siege, and although I am now pretty well, General Williams and Dr. Sandwith agree in thinking that I ought not to remain here during the winter. There will be very little to do here, and the cold might be too much for me, accustomed as I have been to the warm climate of India for so many years. The Russians are evidently preparing to leave us, and they seem to be collecting carts from all parts of the country to remove their baggage.

“It is becoming insupportably tedious here, particularly when one is not well. I have left my nest in the Karadagh for some days, as it was too cold

for me, and am now living very comfortably down at the General's, swallowing pills and potions several times in the day. I have had a disagreeable attack brought on by getting wet and being over-anxious, &c., but I am now only suffering from the consequent debility, and that will soon disappear I hope.

“I am sorry to say the cholera has broken out among our men, but in a mild form. We hear that the Russians are suffering very severely from it. I hope it will soon disappear with us, under the good regulations established by our General for cleanliness and ventilation. Desertion has, thank God, entirely ceased, owing to the severe examples which had become quite necessary.”

LETTER XXXVIII.

“GLORIOUS NEWS!! DEFEAT OF THE RUSSIANS!!!

“KARS, *September 30th*, 1855.

“Here I am on the Karadagh again, none the worse for my late illness. This morning the Russians attacked us in full force: the fight was a most bloody one, and lasted seven hours and a half without one second's intermission. What do you think of us Kars men after that? I was not actively engaged, as they knew better than to attack this almost impregnable battery a second time, but I

hope I did good service with my heavy guns, which twice drove them out of a battery they had taken and turned upon us. It was a nasty sight the field afterwards; it was completely covered with dead bodies. The defence was commanded by my dear old General Kmety, and when our General thanked him in the name of Queen Victoria for his gallant repulse of the enemy, I thought the brave old boy's heart would have burst with joy, he was so proud. The Turks fought like heroes, almost like fiends; I never saw such desperate recklessness of life.

"I have been again mentioned in despatches. They, with the post, are going out almost immediately, so that I have no more time to write. Surely now I shall soon be with you! God bless you all."

LETTER XXXIX.

"KARS, *Sunday night, September 30th, 1855.*

"We are looking out for another attack to-night. I may have something in the morning to tell you.

"Oct. 1.—We were not attacked, so I will try to give you a more detailed account of the battle of the 29th. At about half-past four A.M. on that day, we were awakened by a cannonade in the direction of Tachmasb battery. I immediately threw on my clothes and galloped up to the Karadagh, which was my post. It was then too dark to see anything

but the flash of the guns and musketry. As soon as it began to be light enough to distinguish any thing, I saw that a hard fight was going on, and some time afterwards I heard cheering from under the English batteries, which lie between Karadagh and Tachmasb, and which are separated from my batteries, Karadagh and Arab Tabia, by the river which runs through a deep gorge between the hills. Directly after I heard the cheering, I was horrified to see five battalions of Russian infantry, with sixteen guns and three regiments of dragoons, rush into the English batteries, drive out the troops defending them, and then turn the guns upon the town. I immediately dismounted all my Bashi-Bazooks, and sent them across the river, together with 800 men from my force, to try and retake the English batteries. I then opened a brisk fire upon the Russians from my guns simultaneously with the fire of the guns from Fort Lake. They stood it bravely for a time, but the fire was too hot for them: their artillery retreated outside the lines, and the infantry took up a position in one of the captured batteries, where they held out like men for some time, but at last they were driven out, and we held 'our own' again.

“Some seven or eight hundred Russians fell here, and I lost some twenty or thirty killed and wounded. They had nothing but small field-pieces with them,

and I had large guns, or the event might have been different, but my thirty-two pounder carried more than double the distance that their guns did. The fight at Tachmasb I did not see, but I received a private note from the General last night, in which he told me that 4150 Russians have already been buried by us, and that there are hundreds more still to inter. The Russians also were hard at work all day yesterday in camp, burying their dead.

“It has been a most bloody affair. They say that we shall be attacked again, but I cannot believe it. However, we are all on the alert, in case such a thing should occur, and the Russians will get a worse drubbing than they did before, if they try it on again, for our fellows are in such spirits now, that they will fight like so many tigers. The fight lasted for seven hours and a half, and the roar of artillery and musketry was terrific. We have a number of prisoners and wounded, and more of the latter are being brought into hospital every day—poor wretches! they had hidden themselves among the rocks after the action.

“I went over the field as soon as I could leave my post, and found the ground completely covered with dead bodies. In some places they were actually lying in mounds, heaped one over the other, mostly smashed to pieces by our guns.

“I believe the General has again mentioned me

honourably in his despatches, but I don't know what he said, as I did not see them. When I get home, I shall be able to show you all the different positions and points of attack, &c. I have sent my interpreter down into the town to buy some trophies of the fight for you all. The plunder was great. These Turkish barbarians stripped all the dead bodies, and are now clothed quite decently in Russian habiliments. Russian bank notes are selling in Kars for next to nothing; a five rouble note, worth in Russia 100 piastres, is sold for ten; and muskets and rifles are going for twenty piastres a piece. The field is strewn with round shot and grape, and white with the paper of the cartridges which were used. Hurrah for old Kars! say I, and hurrah for our General! for without him I should like to know where we should have been; and I think I may say, Hurrah for the English officers!

“ My late illness has quite spoiled me for letter-writing, so I shall shut up this scrawl, particularly as I see I am beginning to boast about English officers, &c., though that is excusable after all our hard work and short commons. Young Teesdale behaved like a hero on the ‘great day,’ and is as plucky a young fellow as I ever met.”

LETTER XL.

"KARS, *October 3rd*, 1856.

"I suppose you have heard of our attack, and likewise of the way we whopped the Russians, from —, to whom I wrote an account of it. Up to this morning we have buried 6250 bodies, and more still remain. This is no exaggeration, but sad solemn truth. Our killed and wounded amount to about 1200, all told.

"I hope you think we did our duty; it was 'touch and go,'—but our fellows fought well, and will fight much better the next time. It was certainly a glorious victory, when you take into consideration the shocking difficulties we had to contend with. Our Pasha (Williams) may well be proud.

"I am sorry to say the Turks (some of them) behaved badly, and bayoneted the wounded Russians; it was impossible to avoid it; we had but three English officers engaged, and we could not stop it. But all glory to dear old Kmety, who fought like a lion. When he heard of the part I took in driving the Russians out of the English batteries, he rushed upon me and kissed me on both cheeks, calling me 'mein sohn, mein sohn,' and other very flattering epithets, which modesty forbids me to repeat. Dear old man! he has no wish for himself, but to do something for *the* Turkey which

saved him from the Russians after the Hungarian revolution. He is one of the few remaining real Hungarian patriots, and I only wish I were Queen of England for one half hour, that I might reward him as he deserves.

“Directly after the action, our own brave General (Williams) came to where he was and said, ‘General Kmety, I thank you in the name of the Queen of England for your gallantry and exertions on this day.’ Kmety told me privately, afterwards, that had he been presented with an English earldom and 20,000*l.* per annum (a fabulous sum to him), he should not have been half so pleased. He was not touched, although in the hottest fire all the morning. His aide-de-camp was shot through the arm, but I hope it will be saved.

“I am sure the English government (or people) should do something for him. He is a *gentleman*! though now serving on the half-pay of a colonel: many men who were in a *very* subordinate position two years ago are now his seniors in the service. He was selected from among them, however, to take the command of the first division in Kars, and nobly he has done his duty.

“Some two or three thousand empty carts have just arrived at the Russian camp, so I suppose they will be off to-morrow or the next day. Directly they

do start I shall be off for home, that sweet word! for the winter; so you may expect me any day.

“I have had a long and terrible attack of dysentery, brought on by exposure to cold at night, and being so often wet through, and, though much better, I am still very weak. The sight of you all, and two or three weeks' good nourishment, will soon set me up again.

“Stuart and Cameron tried to get here the other day, but were obliged to ‘cut and run,’ and the Cossacks got all their baggage; and one of Stuart's revolvers was taken in the attack here, and sold in the bazaar.

“H. L. T.”

“Half-past Eleven, P.M.—Such wars, and rumours of wars. The General has had some information which makes him think that we shall be attacked to-night by Arab Tabia. I may as well, therefore, give up all idea of sleep. I am told that three battalions of infantry are encamped in front of my battery. I see them not; and it is utterly impossible that any troops could come round to that side without my seeing them. However, they have reinforced my batteries with four guns and five hundred men. I will tell you in the morning if any bloody battle should occur during the night.

“H. L. T.”

LETTER XLI.

"KARS, October 5th, 1855.

"I am very sleepy, but my bed is soaked through and through by the rain ; and I must wait patiently till morning, that it may get dried ; for I am afraid, in my present weak state, of taking cold : so I will write now, and have a good sleep to-morrow.

"The rain still continues, and the atmosphere is so misty, that I cannot even see the Russian camp ; but I should imagine it must be about a foot deep in water, which will, no doubt, improve the sanatory condition of our adversaries. We hear they are losing seven hundred men *per diem* from cholera. We have it among us also, but slightly in comparison, and we call it cholerine.

"October 6th.—The sun having made his appearance, I have hung my bedding out to dry, and will finish this letter while that process is going on ; after which I anticipate a very jolly sleep. I told you, in my last, of the death of the Turkish Colonel I liked so much. He was *one* of my pets, and I have sent to purchase his amber mouth-piece as an 'Andenken ;' it was a very handsome one, and I shall keep it for his sake, poor fellow."

LETTER XLII.

"October 8th, half-past 5 A.M.

"All is quiet this morning in the Russian camp, and also in our own. Five of my men succeeded in deserting last night. I wish I had caught them. I can conceive nothing more cowardly than to desert at such a moment."

LETTER XLIII.

"KARS, October 10th, 1855.

"Nothing has been going on for the last two or three days; and I have been looking out anxiously for a post as usual. I greatly fear that many of your letters must be taken by the enemy, for we have had no post for a month. We have only heard that Sebastopol has fallen, without any particulars.

"That poor Turkish Colonel who died had a favourite cat; and as I live in his tent now, the cat and myself have struck up a great friendship. The poor animal has a very bad cough, and I have, accordingly, given it one of M——'s cough pills, which I hope will have a beneficial effect, though they look very much like bread coloured with mustard. What an ungrateful fellow I am for talking in this way of such kindly-meant gifts! but don't send me

any more medicines. I never take any of them ; and, Sandwith being both a clever fellow and a most kind, attentive friend, I do not require them.

“I am scribbling on, as I do not want to go to sleep before midnight. I cannot think the Russians will attack again, but they may ; and there is nothing like keeping a good look-out till they are so far distant, that you may take off your clothes and go to sleep in full security. I have been obliged to raise a sort of earthwork, or traverse, under my table (or rather board), to enable me to write on it with comfort, and I consider it rather a neat piece of upholstery-work. The only objection is, that it has no legs, and I can't get mine stowed away under it.

“I must tell you of a compliment which was paid to me the other day, but don't think me conceited for relating it ; I am sure you will not, for you know how little I am given to boasting. I was ordered to bring over three battalions from my two batteries into Fort Lake, a large fort some two miles from where I am, and I accordingly went and placed myself under Colonel Lake's orders. I patrolled all that night with him, and next morning he went down to the town to breakfast, and left me in charge of the three battalions, ordering me not to leave till his return. In the course of about two hours, an order came up from the Turkish authorities for the three

battalions to return to their former post. I was rather puzzled as to what was my duty ; for being the Commandant of these men I should have gone with them, but Colonel Lake had ordered me to remain ; so I sent the battalions back to the Karadagh, and waited and waited about four hours, but no Colonel Lake came. I accordingly covered my face up with a cloth and had a snooze, and in about another hour up he rode, and I was awakened by hearing him say to his interpreter, ' There, I told you Thompson would never leave a post at which he had been ordered to remain ; ' and then seeing I was awake, he added—

“ ‘ I knew, old fellow, I could depend upon you to remain here, although they all said you would go back to your tent.’ I was very proud of this compliment.”

LETTER XLIV.

“ KARS, *October 14th*, 1855.

“ The whole country seems on fire, and to me it presents a very beautiful spectacle, but I fear it will be received with very different eyes by the poor townspeople and villagers, who have lost their property.

“ *Some one must* indemnify them during the winter, for the whole country, from Gumri to

Erzeroum, will be one vast desert, and it is capable of supplying the whole of England with grain.

“It is blowing hard, and my tent-door is shut up, and I can't send to my servant to get a live coal, which one must have to light a tchibouque, consequently I must cease smoking. I am obliged to write to you on these infinitesimally small sheets of paper, as I have none other at this moment.

“The wind has gone down considerably, so I shall go on writing. I am about fifty times more anxious about my batteries now than I ever was. I cannot sleep a wink for fear of an attack, although I am next to certain that none will take place; but it would be so dreadful to be surprised by them after the beating we gave them. I don't fear our men in the fight at all—they are fine, brave fellows; but I fear any relaxation of vigilance, and I get quite nervous about it. We have taught the Turks a great deal, but that does not save us exposure to hard work one bit.

“We are all such good friends, that it is very annoying to me to be always alone in my battery, while the rest are enjoying each other's society down below in the town; but I must do my work, however unpleasant, and, please God, I shall have my reward some day—it may be only in the satisfaction of my own conscience,—but I hope to have the good

opinion of my General, which I prize more than I can well express to you.

“I do not tell you much of what is going on in the town, as I should have nothing left to talk to you about when I get home. I scarcely ever write *all* I should *like* to say, for I do not fancy the Muscovites ‘taking stock’ of my letters, and perhaps laughing at them. One thing, however, I may be allowed to say, that I hope they are equally well off with ourselves for food! They still occupy their old encampments, and don’t appear at all inclined to move. Their cavalry alarm us every night, and we consequently get but little sleep. I don’t think I have had a good night’s rest for weeks; but pray don’t think that I am complaining,—that is not in my nature, you know; but I am weak, I think, very little tires me, and my horses don’t get *very* good dinners; to save them, I watch more than I ought to do, and hence I feel sometimes a little crazy, and I have been foolish enough to put it down in black and white.”

LETTER XLV.

“KARS, October 15th, 1855.

“My poor cat, the favourite of the unfortunate Colonel who died here, which had taken up its quarters in my tent, breathed its last this morning, after a short illness of only two days. It was much beloved for its numerous estimable qualities, and

died lamented by a large circle of friends. The immediate cause of death was peritonitis or cholera, which of the two I have not been able to ascertain, as the Doctor is too much occupied with the wounded to be able to spare time for a *post-mortem* examination. It has been decently interred, and I had some thoughts of firing three volleys over its grave, but was afraid of wasting powder in these hard times.

“The whole country round Kars is on fire and looks very grand at night.

“I have just sent down for my little cookery book, to teach my soldier servant how to cook meat without making it absolutely offensive, and have no doubt that I shall succeed, in time, in getting a piece of ‘flesh’ cooked in a cleanly manner.

“I have just forwarded my evening report, and the troops have given their cheer for the Sultan’s prosperity, although he don’t appear to think much of theirs! and so I sit down again to scribble. I was startled just now by hearing a volley of musketry from my other battery, and I rushed out to see what it was, and on asking the sentry outside what it was, he replied quite coolly, ‘It is only a deserter who has just been shot!’ and so it turned out to be.

“It is beginning to be very cold now, morning and evening, although warm and pleasant still during the day; and I am longing for the Russians

to move away, that I may also commence my journey home. Yesterday I employed myself in making rifle-ball cartridge, which is very dirty work, and also dangerous with these clumsy Turks. To-day I have been doing nothing but watch the Russian movements through my glass, which is very slow work, as you may suppose. You must not imagine that because you get your letters from me not quite so often as formerly, that I scribble a bit the less, but it is very difficult now to send away a post from here, owing to the incessant vigilance of the enemy. He has his cavalry videttes all round Kars, and our wretched cavalry have long since faded away into nothing. What few we had left, fought their way through at night, and got to Erzeroum, as we had nothing to give them in the shape of food. I think it very probable that, if the postman (who was unable to get out last night) fails again to night, you will get this letter at the same time with my last.

“Tell S—— that I took her Tennyson under fire on the 29th ult., that I might be able to write down in it the result of the day, which I then and there did in pencil, as she will see on my return.

“Here is an officer come in from the outposts, to say that one of the sentries has just seen a large body of troops moving in front of my battery. I have been out also, but it is too dark to distinguish anything, so I have come back to scribble on to you,

until I hear of something more, and my hands are so cold that I can scarcely hold the pen. I may have to tell you of another battle before I finish this letter. I hope it may be a victory like the last. I have been round to see that 'all is serene,' and must now wait till morning in a state of suspense, as you may imagine. If they *are* there, they are uncommonly quiet, and I don't think they would move so early if they were intending a surprise. However, we shall see. It is a great pity that we have little or no moon. I don't think they can effect a surprise now, as I shall be at any rate ready for them, and I have sent down to the General to have help ready to send up at once in case of need. Once more, if they are there, I'll lay a wager, a good many of them catch colds in the head, for it's as bitter a night as you could wish. My old servant Kadri informs me, that it is his intention to fight very bravely to-night if needful, and to drive back the 'Giaours' if possible: with which laudable intention he is gone off to get me some coffee, and a pipe to comfort me.

"I have been all round my works, and as yet all is quiet (9 P.M.)

"I now begin to think it was either a false alarm, or that the Russians are going off during the night, but to-morrow's dawn will tell.

"1 P.M.—All was quiet up to this time, when sud-

denly I heard a sharp fire of musketry open, but from quite a different direction to what I anticipated. It only lasted about half an hour, and then one of our guns was fired, and all was still. I was in a great state of alarm. I thought it was, in all probability, a feint to draw off our attention from this side of the works, so as to make a successful attack in our direction; so I redoubled my vigilance, but it all passed away quietly, and here we are at 11 A.M., 16th, in exactly the same position as we were yesterday, save and except that we have one day's less provisions, and Omar Pasha should be one day nearer to us. I have been trying in vain to get a sleep during the last two hours, but without success; and I hear that a post came in during the night, and am very anxious to know whether there are any letters for me, as there ought to be many from you all by this time.

“8 P.M.—I have been down to dinner at the house, where I am welcomed quite as a rarity by all the party, save the Doctor, who is a constant visitor, he having more time on his hands than any of the rest, as he has lots of assistants.

“We have no news to-day, except from a deserter, who was a great fool, and hardly knew his own name. It appears that on the occasion of last night's alarm, our videttes were suddenly attacked by a lot of Cossacks, who came down with loud

hurrahs, and then began to fire at each other in the dark, and after half an hour's nonsense of this kind, the Cossacks went away, and all was again quiet. We hear from spies that Omar Pasha has taken Kutais without opposition, and has marched straight on to Tiflis, finding the road to Akhiska impracticable, by which folly he has lost forty most invaluable days. He should have marched at once on Tiflis, and not have wasted his time in trying to cut a way through an almost impenetrable forest to a strong fortress, which might have taken him weeks or months to reduce even when he got there."

LETTER XLVI.

"KARS, Oct. 17th, 1855.

"About two hours ago we were present at a very interesting ceremony, which took place in the Mushir's tent. After a very flattering and complimentary speech, thanking us most kindly for the great exertions, &c. we had used during the siege, he presented us all with the order of the Medjidié, in the name of the Sultan. I have the *3rd Class*! which is generally only given to colonels and civilians of the highest rank. The General also made us a speech, to the effect that success had been owing to the efforts we made, and the uncomplaining way in which we had done work that required many more officers. He also thanked us

very much, and told us we were to receive in addition a gold medal for the siege of Kars, and I hope also the silver war medal from the English Government. That will make up my number to four.

“The Russians are still sending away their carts, and I hope will soon take themselves off altogether; and then I start home as hard I can go, for I have been very unwell, and am not accustomed to such severe cold (that is, to nightly exposure to it). It has affected me considerably.

“You have no idea how these Turks can fight when they like. You may imagine how well they behaved, when I tell you, that we were attacked by a force of about 33,000 men, and of ours 7000 were not engaged,—and that the loss on the Russian side, killed and wounded, was from 10,000 to 12,000 men, and ours not 1100.

“We can still hold out for seventy days at full rations * which will bring us to Christmas-day, and if the Russians are here then, they will be hard-frozen about fifteen feet deep in the snow, and will come out next spring quite fresh, though not so lively as they might be. Mouravieff has, I fancy, heard some false reports of Omar Pasha's army, and is hanging on as long as he can, or we should have been freed from his presence some days ago. He is also, I fancy, under the impression that we

* See note, p. 44.

are much worse off for food than we really are, and he may perhaps imagine that we will capitulate while there is a single rat left to eat, or a dog, or even a jackass."

LETTER XLVII.

"KARS, *October 19th, 1855.*

"It is my firm belief that the Russians are going to stop here, and found a colony with what remains of their army next spring. They don't seem at all inclined to move, and yet they have sent off all their heavy baggage. They must feel rather cold at night in this weather, only in light marching order. We have heard that Omar Pasha is within three days' march of Tiflis, which makes it more strange that General Mouraveiff does not go away. He must be aware that we have plenty of food * and that the cholera has virtually left us, so I cannot understand his reason for staying on. It must be that he is in hopes of a capitulation, but that is out of the question for two months to come or more.

"About one hundred Cossacks came galloping down in front of my battery about an hour ago, and had two men shot. This is the third day they have tried to molest our foragers, and each time have only succeeded in doing nothing and getting a

* See note, p. 44.

man or two killed or wounded. You will be very pleased with my Medjidié star; it is very handsome, and is worn round the neck instead of on the breast, so as just to hang in front at the bottom of your jacket collar. The regiment here on the Karadagh is to be relieved to-morrow, as there have been several desertions from it. The men and officers don't know it as yet, and there will be a great row when they do, as they will not like to leave the English Bey, who gave them money to buy soap and tobacco. They have hardly a rag to their backs, and are some of them thirty-six months in arrear of their pay: how can one blame them for desertion? and yet if they were not severely punished, we should have the evil increasing.

“20th.—‘Here we are again,’ as the clown says. The Russians are still in their old quarters, and no signs of a move. They generally remain quiet on Sundays. We had no alarm last night, so the soldiers had a good night's rest, and I have had no desertions during the night. There is nothing moving in the country round, and were it not for the sight of the Russian camp, you might imagine that everything was in a state of peace and quietness. I do so wish they would attack us again; our soldiers are in capital spirits, and another such thrashing as they got on the 29th would completely annihilate their army.

“My stupid servant has completely spoiled such a beautiful Persian carpet I was going to bring you home, by spilling my ink-bottle over it. However, I will bring home three very handsome ones.

“I have heard nothing of or from the Duke of Newcastle, so I suppose he has given up his intention of coming to these regions, and I think he is quite wise. He would get nothing but hard knocks and bad dinners, and very likely the cholera; and carry away no notion of the actual state of the country, except that it was nearly a desert, and that the people were most of them rogues and vagabonds, and even worse; and that he would be better at home in England, where I heartily wish myself at the present moment.

“21st.—No movement on the part of the enemy, and a great quantity of carts are just in sight, coming from Gumri. They are too distant for me to see, as yet, whether they are laden or not; indeed, no one can see them but myself; but I know the exact spot where they cross the hill, and can see them through my glass quite plainly. I have just had a visit from the General's servant to inquire whether I am fond of farinaceous food, as there are only two bullocks left on our establishment. I humbly answer, that I scorn everything, except BEEF. I never saw such a bad lot of foragers as they are; they are just like so many children. Thank

goodness, we have lots of nice young donkeys, which ought not to be bad food. At any rate they are wholesome feeders, and are, strange to say, rather fat than otherwise. I am going to inhabit my large tent again, as I find that the small one is uncomfortable when I have visitors, and it will do very well as a sleeping tent. I shall use the other as my drawing-room, and this small one as my bed-room. There's luxury for you.

"12 NOON.—About 3000 carts have just come over the hill-side from Gumri. They appear to be all empty, and I begin to hope that the Russians will pack their tents in them either to-day or to-morrow, and take their departure; we are quite tired of them, I'm sure.

"23rd.—It was so cold last night, and is so still, that I can hardly write. We have just got the news that Selim Pasha, at the head of twenty-five battalions, is on his march from Trebizond. With the troops and English officers now at Erzeroum he ought to relieve us most effectually.

"I told you in my last not to believe in Omar Pasha. I have just re-read my letter, and find that it is a very stupid one and purely egotistical, which you must excuse, as I have nothing earthly to write about. Last night it froze hard, I hope the Russians enjoyed it. I take a mischievous delight in thinking how cold they must be."

LETTER XLVIII.

“KARS, October 24th, 1855.

“I begin to despair of ever escaping the clutches of these Muscovites ; so think it is better to keep on writing to you all, as I cannot present myself in person. The Russians are still here, and I expect that they won't move for about ten days, when they will be obliged to go, as Selim Pasha is now close to Trebizond with a considerable army, and Veli Pasha is in Erzeroum with about the same number, while a large force has been detached from Omar Pasha's army, and is marching on this place *viâ* Ardahan. We shall, therefore, be relieved eventually, although they might and *ought* to have assisted us long ago. The weather up here on the Karadagh is becoming very cold at night, and a tent is poor protection against it. The cholera has now left us entirely, and has been succeeded by scurvy ; but we have few cases even of the latter.

“29th.—I have again been ill ; and, though I am now much better, Sandwith has thought it advisable for me not to go up the hill at present. A flag of truce came in to-day with a card, bearing the name (printed) of Captain H. L. Thompson ; and a message

to the effect, that General Mouravieff* had a decoration of his, which he would send the next day, meaning to-morrow. I presume it is my Burmah medal; and am very much obliged to him for his delicacy in not keeping it. There must be some letters from some of you with it, which I hope he will also send. We are all getting heartily tired of the continued blockade, and wish the Russians would attack us again, or else go away altogether. My diet is at present rice and water, and tea *ad libitum*, both of which decoctions I detest; but Sandwith won't give me anything else, so I am obliged to be content, though I am ravenously hungry. I am longing for to-morrow to come, that I may get my Burmah medal. I am quite childish on the subject.

"I am afraid you will all put me down as a very stupid correspondent. I must of necessity be

* This courteous act on the part of General Mouravieff was in consequence of a letter addressed to him by Mrs. Thompson, mother of the late Captain Thompson:—

"Brave parmi les Braves,—Vous ne faites pas la guerre aux sentiments de la nature. Veuillez donc, mon Général, remettre à mon fils, une décoration que la Reine lui a donné, et que la fortune de guerre vous apporte.

"Mon fils, est de l'état major du Général Williams à Kars, et se nomme, Le Capitaine Henri Langhorne Thompson.

"Recevez, Monsieur, le général l'assurance de ma haute considération, et permettez que je me soucris

"Vôtre serviteur dévouée,

"ANNE THOMPSON."

egotistical, as I have nothing but myself to scribble about. One thing you may be sure of, which is, that the moment the road to Erzeroum is clear, I am off as hard as horses can carry me. I shall only bring home two small portmanteaus with me to Trebizond, and shall come home *viâ* Marseilles. The exact date of my departure I cannot, of course, tell you, 'as it depends upon circumstances over which I have no control.' I am sitting on a box, and writing on another, and my feet have both gone to sleep. I think I shall try if my head will follow their example. I have been obliged to *sell* another horse by the General's wish, to make our forage last the longer. I gave 1500 piastres for him, and he fetched 200. Poor 'Hafiz' must go in another week, and then I shall only have 'Ginjee' left out of my formerly large stud. The horse I sold yesterday was a little chestnut Arab, which I bought for my interpreter to ride, and now he must trudge it. Our poor nags are badly off; but do not fear for us, we have plenty to eat.

"I must try and go to bed, for poor Kadri won't go till I do, and I don't like keeping him up.

"The great dearth here is want of books. I think I have read every English book in garrison twenty times over.

"The General came and paid me a long visit to-day. He felt my bony arm, and said, 'You are

getting very thin, my boy; I shall send you off as soon as ever it is possible, to let you fatten up in England for next year's campaign.' He is so *very* kind, and so are they all. I think we shall never forget one another, however we may be separated in future."

LETTER XLIX.

"KARS, October 30th, 1855.

"While I was dressing this morning, the General rushed into my room to inquire whether I was well enough for a fight; and on my replying in the affirmative, he said, 'Order your horse quickly and go up to the Karadagh, as the enemy is turning out to attack us.' I was not long, as you may imagine, in getting to my post. They did not give us any satisfaction, however; but after making a demonstration they returned to their quarters. Shortly afterwards a flag of truce came in with my Burmah medal. Whatever Mouravieff may do now, I shall always think of him as a good fellow, for having sent me my medal,—and isn't it a handsome one too?

"I went to-day to see three wounded Russian officers who are prisoners here. We have made them as comfortable as we could, and send the poor fellows their dinner and all the clothes we can spare,

and do what we can for them, but we are badly off ourselves for *comforts*.

"I am very sorry none of them can speak German, or I would go and sit and talk with them every day (being also on the sick list); but only one of them can speak even a very little French, and that so badly it is impossible to understand him. . . .

"I am both sleepy and hungry, which I set down to be a sign of convalescence; and hope to be at my duty on the Karadagh again in a day or two.

"To-morrow will be the last day of October, and the only subject of congratulation that I shall have is, that we are still masters of Kars."

LETTER L.

"KARS, 2 P.M. *October 30th*, 1855.

"I have this day received my medal. I am delighted that you wrote to General Mouravieff, or otherwise I should never have seen it; and I value that medal more than I should the Order of the Garter, for I worked hard for it, and I bled for it.

"Your letters of the 22nd September, General Mouravieff has not yet thought proper to send, IF he has any. I suppose they contained no treason. Of course he will not gratify me by a sight of the newspaper cuttings you say you have sent me, as

they would tell us, no doubt, of successes in the Crimea.

“I have been congratulated on all sides about my Burmah medal. The good, kind General hoped that I might get many more, and live to be an honour to my country. . . .

“We had a letter from one of our expected reliefs last night; he is not far off: more I cannot tell you for fear this letter should suffer the fate of the last despatches. I have sent poor Hafiz to the bazaar to-day to be sold; I suppose he will fetch about 5*l*. I shall not lose by him in a pecuniary point of view, for of course I shall be re-imbursed for all my nags, but he had been my favourite and companion, and I grieve over him!

“The Seraskier has written up to thank the Kars army for their gallantry on the 29th, and His Imperial Majesty, the Sultan, is going to write an autograph letter of thanks as well. I am sick of waiting for this horrid business, and long to be breathing English air once more. If I had kept my health, I could have been happy and jolly any where, but I want to feel that I am *at home* once more. My present intention (if all goes well) is to go to Marseilles, and through France as quickly as I can, and I hope to manage the journey in twenty days from Erzeroum, if I can so time it as not to be detained at Trebizond waiting for a steamer.

“H. L.T.”

LETTERS

OF MAJOR-GENERAL SIR WILLIAM FENWICK
WILLIAMS, BART., K.C.B.

LETTER I.

“Camp, KARS, *September 28th*, 1854.

“I got here on the 25th, and have been employed by day in seeing and counting the troops, and by night in writing my reports on them. Sandwith joined me a day out of Erzeroum, and is a great comfort. The rascality and peculation here pass all bounds;* instead of 30,000 regulars, there are about 16,000; fancy the robbery! I have counted everything, man and cartridge. The men are naked, but I trust all my reports from Erzeroum and Kars will open the eyes of England, France, and the Turks at Stamboul. The army, except Tahir and his artillery, behaved *most infamously*. I hope to get *him* promoted. The INFANTRY would not form square, and were cut down to the tune of ‘Amàn Amàn.’ The CAVALRY *would not approach the enemy!!* and here these rascally Pashas are smoking and drinking sherbet.”

* It should be understood, that in these letters, as elsewhere, remarks unfavourable to the Turks, are intended to apply to venal Pashas, and not to the ill-treated and brave rank and file. A. L.

LETTER II.

“Camp, near KARS, October 6th, 1854.

“Yours of the 28th of August has just come into camp, and I must send you a line in return. I rest not night nor day to bring all the various thefts and wants of this army to the knowledge of the allies. Never was there such an Augean stable to clear out—a remnant of 17,000 half-naked troops with a muster-roll of 30,000—and no preparation made either at Erzeroum or Kars for their winter-quarters. This *was* the picture. I have personally seen to all, and afterwards written my various reports to be copied in triplicate by my aide Zohrab and the Doctor, who also assists me. By the time that Ismail Pasha arrives all will be ready for the troops should snow or rain fall and winter set in (as it sometimes does) early. Believe me this is the faithful picture of Kars, and of all Asiatic Turkey.

“I have told the sad tale both in despatches to Lords Stratford, Clarendon, and Raglan, and recommended that the fine turbanned heads who thus laugh at *the Sultan's firmans* and *Europe's credulity* should be sent through the snow to Constantinople. And yet Lord —— writes to the *Daily News* to ‘*Abstain from interference in the interior affairs of Turkey,*’ and adds ‘*let us not add our fanaticism to that of the Turks.*’ Does he call the

protection of the unhappy Christians 'fanaticism'—and the taking the most thorough and unmistakable pledges from these brutes 'fanaticism?' *Towards the public* this is not the time to express such sentiments, but wait till Russia is humbled (in a sea of blood for us poor English!) and then we shall see what our statesmen are made of. I hope I may be alive and in London to bestir myself in the good cause. Until Ismail Pasha gets up here from Constantinople, I can have no influence beyond that of feeding the Kars garrison, which I do through the Vali of that place, and the Governor-general of this district.

"I fear you will hear of some *faux pas* at Toprak-Kala, and they have never attempted to fortify Erzeroum, although the sites of the Russian redoubts are staring them in the face. Here is a pretty dish for you, my friend."

LETTER III.

"ERZEROU, *December 16th, 1854.*

"The snow now comes down in masses for the first time. The open weather has done wonders for me in pressing forward supplies for our garrison of Kars, where all is going on admirably—increasing commissary stores, discipline, and drill, to which add comparative freedom from dysentery and typhus, and you have the fruits of my labours in

housing these 12,000, the remnant of bayonets and sabres of Zarif Mustapha's army. God grant that our ministers will demand his exile and disgorgement of his ill-gotten wealth (half a million). Here I am attending to the further expedition of food to Kars, and along the line of operation towards Bayazeed.

"I have a hard fight against the intrigues of those whose rascality I have exposed, but who remain unpunished. I have received every encouragement from the F. O., and from Lord Raglan, and I AM SURE of *their* support.

"In fine, by going to Kars and finding the army with a *disgraced* general at its head, I seized the reins, rectified the muster-rolls, got bread and meat instead of black dough and carrion for the poor soldiers, visited their cook houses at daylight and dark, brought to light the theft of 12,000 great coats by the Colonels, exposed the drunkenness of the superior officers, (which might have enabled the Russians to bayonet us in our tents, if they had been so inclined), cleansed the hospitals and town, and turned out the rascally Pashas from places where two hundred and fifty men are now comfortably housed, aye, three hundred in some. *Here*, last winter, they drank and caroused, whilst the garrison, of nearly 30,000 men, were packed like herrings, in unventilated dens, and

consequently 10,000 died of typhus—THERE are their graves, poor fellows, and HERE is no *romance* of the ‘Hostage of Kars.’

“Ismail Pasha is quietly seated at Constantinople, whilst the worthless fellows he sends here smoke and do nothing. The enemy have been close to Toprakala, and might have made a dash (if they had known all) on this place, captured the battering-train, which I found in the mud near Trebizond, and got on here by accusing Hafiz Pasha, who governs there, of gross neglect,—seized all the grain and arabas on this plain, and been again at Toprakala before Kars,—which was, be it known, watched by all Bebutoff’s army,—could have come to the rescue.

“These things have all passed away, and as I told the Governor yesterday, ‘if we begin to-morrow, we shall not do more than get all things into order for the campaign in April or May.’ I have therefore commenced *hectoring* for ammunition for the siege guns, thirty-two in number, which have barely five hundred, instead of twelve hundred rounds a piece. No attempt to form entrenchments here for our magazine’s defence, if such necessities are ever thought of by these drunken, good-for-nothing rascals. Here are my tasks for 1855; those of 1854 are closed with the help of Heaven, and my knowledge of the moment to seize a Turk by the

beard. Yesterday I pounced upon their *bread*; to-day I am going through the snow to fall on their camp kettles, and (unexpectedly) expose these thieving colonels as regards soup, (*chourba*, as we Turks call it). I am well, and *perfectly* happy in the consciousness of having done my duty, in spite of unheard-of neglect."

LETTER IV.

"ERZEROUM, *January 21st*, 1855.

"If facts bear out the complaints against all parties, I presume we shall have a change of system: we want *organisation and forethought*. I only wish I had been alongside of the Duke of Newcastle, that is, in his suite; my *experience*, and not *sharpness*, would have been of use to him.

"I have, by the last Tartar, received the most triumphant despatches and letters from the Earl of Clarendon and Lord Raglan; also a 'private' from the Duke of Newcastle's secretary. *Every act* has been approved of, and a fact placed upon record, that I have, through my own efforts, saved the remnant of the army, and saved the Porte millions of piastres, from downright robbery. The Brigadier-ship was accompanied by a Ferik rank by the Sultan, under the title of 'Williams Pasha;' and I had all the blackguards on their knees, and will keep them

there. The firman was read to me, *I in English uniform*, which I will make them all respect: it is a great innovation, and I will carry it out to the letter and spirit: it is Lord Clarendon's doing. I had a very flattering letter from Lord Wodehouse. I am now in the Medjlis; and Shukri and Hussein are to go to the right-about.

“Teesdale is safe at Kars, and doing his duty well. Three officers (of the artillery, engineers, and line), are near me, on their way from England: when they arrive I shall send them to Kars, and have Teesdale with me again: I have this moment heard from him. Let us see how we are to be supported by the allies next spring. We can hold on the defensive till something is done. The Kurds and their Russian spies have been doing mischief at Jezira, Iz-dinsheer Bey having hoisted the standard of revolt there. I am now sending up letters to all the chiefs to mind their eyes, or they will have our English, French, and Turkish armies on them. Don't compare English with Turks in *any* respect; English *generals* and *drummers* are, to a man, *brave* and *honest*. These scoundrels are quite the reverse. Recollect the *distance* from Balaklava, and that from the French line to Sebastopol; recollect we bore the brunt of Alma and Inkermann. Our organisation wants a reform, but the terrible storm did more for the enemy than our *want of that virtue* did.”

LETTER V.

“ERZEROUM, *February 20th*, 1854.

“I have just come in from a ride in the snow, and a meeting with Vassif Pasha, the provisional Mushir, who has the most stringent orders to take my advice upon all points. Thus, at the eleventh hour, and when the snow is going off at Kars, the battle is gained! I had, however, brought Ahmet Pasha of Olti to book before this cudgel was placed in my hands. He is convicted by a Medjlis of *theft, drunkenness, and murder*, and is being sent in from Kars as a prisoner. I shall move for ten years of chains for him. All the guilty are, by Vassif's instructions, to be brought to instant trial; so the dreams I have formed are to be realised. The orders are direct from the Sultan, through the Grand Vizier, *and I hold a copy of the order.*

“I will make the Kars army a model for the rest, for I doubt not that Omer Pasha's Colonels are as great thieves as Zarif Mustapha and Co. However, that is not my affair! We have a good sum of hard money for the soldiers, poor fellows! Teesdale is well, and carrying on his work satisfactorily.”

LETTER VI.

“ERZEROUM, *May 2nd*, 1855.

“I have not a moment to myself, and at nightfall am ready to drop asleep like a dead man. It is quite delightful to hear you talk about pitching into the Russians. They have now amassed 36,000 men of all arms at Gumri, and are going to do that beneficent act towards us. 300 men have been sent to this army this year, so you may imagine how highly we are thought of in Stamboul; let us however stand firm and do our duty. The forts were armed, one and all yesterday, with prayers from the Mollahs and Armenians, and about 3000 armed men from the town swelled our little garrison. Let us hope they will fight in case of attack.

“The weather is very rainy, or I would be off tomorrow, but the roads are quagmires, and we should lose all our horses. I have sent abundant supplies to Kars, more than 4500 mules from my own door, independent of those which under my word Tahir Pasha gets; so now we can breathe if the Russians besiege Kars. June is now upon us, and what can be expected from any quarter? Now you talk about going too fast. Of the army which I have kept on its legs, the cavalry are in slippers, and the infantry without knapsacks; a simple cotton bag carries their all! You also say many consoling things; I there-

fore only mutter curses, instead of openly crying out against the way that Asia has been neglected."

LETTER VII.

"ERZEROUH, *May 7th*, 1855.

"Many thanks for yours of the 7th April. I wrote to Lords Clarendon and Panmure, and to General Vivian by the last post. I am getting on capitally; no one would go to Kars for these Turks, who have robbed them to such a tune. I induced Persians to *put down their loads* and go, making the military Medjlis (council) pay 190 piastres per load. The garrison was in much want, and if the Russians had known it, we might have been driven out, and that too not by the bayonet. I have sent off another 1000 loads, and 2000 more beasts are ready. The next thing I shall seize on will be the *purchase of provisions*, and I have told them so at Constantinople. I have also caused Mustapha Pasha and others to be arrested at Kars, and reforms will go on, in spite of the apathy of Lord ——, and the rascality of the Seraskier—all tremble—and I will make every man who thwarts me shake in his shoes. Lord Clarendon supports me splendidly. What a man is that! I am working to make the Turks the *real hoops* which bind the staves, not the cords which strangle the Christians, and then

cut off half their power. Tahir is working admirably with me, and I guide the civil authorities as well as the military. Pray do not fancy that I am fortifying my BASE and neglecting my FRONT. I HAVE ENTRENCHED KARS and strengthened the works at Euch-Kellisse, Toprakala, Kuprikeuy, &c. I am now arming my works with 32 and 24 prs."

LETTER VIII.

"ERZEROUM, May 22nd, 1855.

"The Kars army goes into camp to-day, and I shall therefore go there after the despatch of the next post. I shall have, by that time, filled the magazines of our garrison there, and finished all the most important lines of defensive works. If they come upon us, I think they will get a warm reception, and I hope the officers will (seeing as they do the wrath of the law falling upon them one by one for last year's capers) hold hard at their posts and fight well; *nous verrons* !

"I have bagged one more Liva (Mustapha), and two Colonels for cowardice and drunkenness, and when I go to Kars, I will, please God, have a full bag of such game. I go quietly, but never *swerve an inch*. The route between this and Kars is positively lined with animals carrying provisions for the army. They come to me, and my note to Tahir pays *half-hire*.

Only see what a little honesty will effect ; the Turks could not get a mule, whereas all the camels, mules, horses, and donkeys, flock to my door, and we shall soon have the arabas."

LETTER IX.

" Erzeroum Road, Devé Boyonou, *Sunday, June 3rd, 1855.*

" The Russians have collected all their forces to bear down upon Kars, and I, *having collected four months' provisions in its magazines*, started last night from Erzeroum, and am putting a finishing stroke to the redoubts here. They also menace from Toprak-Kaláa, and the Mushir was going to uncover that important post. All is however countermanded, and we have 4000 men there with intrenched positions, and all prepared for them in the rear in the event of disasters. I have also an English Major (Olpherts) there with Veli Pasha, and hope he will keep their traces tight whilst I get on to Kars. I came out so as to get all the camp in order, as well as to work the last day here. I have sent off 5000 horses within ten days (besides arabas), loaded with corn, barley, and other *munitions de bouche et guerre*.

" If all goes well we shall keep this country, but in the event of disaster, no one soul is to blame but those who have trifled with my advice, and taken apparent pleasure in my perplexities.

(I mean the Constantinople authorities.) *Here*, within range of my eye, all fear and obey me. But after the works were finished at Erzeroum, and I came here to work with 1000 men, everything became relaxed, and to-day only 150 men appeared ! I sent off to the Vali (Governor-General) and now they are coming along the road. They have tents and provisions found them when they are working out of the reach of the town. I shall be at Kupri-keuy to-morrow. Weather very charming, and *caif* good."

LETTER X.

"KARS, *June 17th*, 1855.

"I have a few moments' respite to give you the news. Yesterday being Baïram, I fully expected a visit from the Russians, who, of course, looked for sleep or feasting on the part of the Turks. They were, however, disappointed ; for I kept the little fellows ready all night preceding the feast, and they stood to their arms till daybreak, when the enemy drove in our advanced posts, and their whole army appeared at six o'clock majestically moving towards our entrenchments, in force about 25,000 men of all arms. Their advanced guard was composed of regular Cossack cavalry, supported by artillery and rockets ; their infantry in three columns flanked by six batteries of eight guns each, and covered by three

regiments of dragoons ; then in the rear of the centre, a column of reserve infantry, and, last of all, arabas carrying three days' provisions. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the scene ; it was clock-machinery ; the Cossack regiments driving in the Bashi Bazouks and cavalry, whilst the great array moved on. No doubt they thought that, what with Baïram and fear, the Turks would bolt ; but they found their error ; the bulk of the Russian army kept out of range ; and, when their cavalry came within a thousand yards, they made a desperate rush to enter the camp with our overpowered horse ; then the guns opened, and showed them that Kars cannot be taken by a *coup de main*, but involves a bloody struggle for its defence or fall. As soon as they found that our shot told upon them, they rapidly retired out of fire, and the whole army disappeared in the same order in which it advanced ; as they carry off their men who fall, it is difficult to ascertain the casualties : nothing can exceed the good spirit of the Turks. The Mushir allows me to take all the work off his shoulders. The Russians are now at their old camps, three and four hours off."

LETTER XI.

" KARS, June 23rd, 1855.

" I requested Brant on the 21st, to inform you that

the enemy had, by a flank march, placed himself in front of our lines towards the east, and about three miles from them. The incessant rains have thus far prevented any movement against us; but he has, by his cavalry, supported by guns, pillaged and burnt a small *depôt* of grain, eight hours on the Erzeroum road, which obliges us to send our courier by Olti to Erzeroum.

“The Russian finding our lines too strong to storm, has sent to Gumri for garrison guns, which are now on the way to his camp. We have afterwards, supposing we are forced, a strong suburb, then the walls of the town, and redoubts on the heights over the river. The garrison is in good heart, and we will do all we can. You see that every disposable regiment of Russians has been collected in Georgia to attack this place, and afterwards Erzeroum.

“Where is Schamyl? We are in excellent health in spite of fatigues.”

LETTER XII.

“KARS, *June 28th*, 1855.

“Brant will have told you that the Russian army, under General Mouravieff, made a flank march after his attempt to take us by surprise, and camped an hour from us, opposite to our weakest face. Yesterday he bore down upon us with twenty-two

battalions, his cavalry and artillery (eighty pieces), but he found our works too strong, and the garrison so steady, that after the most minute reconnoissance, which kept us under arms for eight long hours, he went back to his tents, which were so near, that you could see a soldier stoop to pick up his firelock. To-day he has struck his tents, and gone three hours to the south; more effectually, I presume, to cut off our road of communication to Erzeroum. This gives us breathing-time; for we were nearly worn out, and I have run in to write this line."

LETTER XIII.

"KARS, *July 7th*, 1855.

"We are all well, and have not been idle, either in keeping the troops on the alert by night, or in strengthening our works by day.

"On the 1st instant, the Russian army moved to a strong position two hours further south of us, and having left one half of his forces, consisting of fifteen battalions of infantry, forty guns, and three regiments of cavalry in this position, went off on the Erzeroum road as far as Yenikeuy and Bardos (fifteen hours from Kars); there he seized and destroyed our magazines of wheat, barley, and biscuit, which contained one month's supply. Nothing but the Erzeroum forts, and Veli Pasha's contiguous

position at Kuprikeuy, prevented his dashing on there. But yesterday General Mouravieff came back, and is now before us with all his forces, either for the purpose of assaulting us, or of more closely investing our garrison, which has still the road to Olti open. You may suppose that our rest by day or night amounts to little ; but we are all in excellent health. Upon our holding Kars depends the fate of Asia Minor."

LETTER XIV.

"KARS, *July 14th*, 1855.

"Your letters of the 6th and 7th of June have this instant come in as we were preparing a packet for Erzeroum ; we have to get it off on Saturday instead of Sunday, as the Russians have possession of all the roads save that *viâ* Olti. You must excuse, therefore, my laconic reply. I take night duty from 2.30 A.M. till 7, and have done so for five weeks. Then the enemy sometimes keeps me on the *qui vive* all day. I am nevertheless in good health and *kef*.

"Mouravieff was within 2000 yards of us for hours yesterday with his whole army ; his host moves like clockwork, but he found the heights so strong, that he did not storm, and ultimately went back to his camp. We are increasing our works there to-day, and the enemy is quiet ; let

us see what he will do next. The spirit of the Turks is excellent ; as soon as the *profiles* are put up, they make a frolic of the *redoubts* and *breast-works*. If we had not used our spades and pick-axes so handily during the last month, we should not have been *inside* of Kars, you may take my word for it. I am afraid the troops, which have been driven from the forts of the Black Sea, will reinforce Mouravieff."

LETTER XV.

" KARS, *July 21st*, 1855.

" Since last I wrote to you the Russian army has remained in its camp, but its powerful cavalry has possession of ALL OUR ROADS leading to Erzeroum and Ardahan. An intelligent courier got in yesterday from the former place, but no letter from No. 46. We shall send our packets by the same man to-night, and I hope he will, by clinging to the tops of the mountains, succeed in getting to Erzeroum. General Mouravieff has now examined our positions *all round*—and most minutely, too, always keeping just out of our range. As he marched at various times round the circumference of his operations to effect these purposes, or to pounce on us if he found an opening, we anticipated his arrival at the menaced points, by adding to and

strengthening our defences; so that on the last occasion he sat under a white umbrella for hours, examining redoubts which had sprung up in the night.

“The Turkish infantry are now so many battalions of sappers, and work, not only with cheerfulness, but also with surprising tact and intelligence; this and defending positions are their best qualities, and depend upon it I will not throw them away. If no further reinforcements reach General Mouravieff from those battalions ejected from the stations of the Black Sea, I think he will confine himself to a blockade.

“We are ‘all right,’ except barley for our cavalry and artillery; but grass is very abundant, and we have no marches to make. Night-work falls heavily on us; but we are all quite well.”

LETTER XVI.

“KARS, *August 10th*, 1855.

“Our communications with Veli Pasha *direct*, are cut off thoroughly; but an orderly of cavalry reached us six days ago, with a message from him, who, agreeably to instructions, had made good his retreat from Kuprikeuy, where Mouravieff nearly caught him, and had retired in good order on the Devé Boyonou position. If Mouravieff had beat

him out of it, and assailed my forts, we must have heard of it. Should the Russian General possess himself of our battering train, which forms a large part of their armament, good-bye to Kars (38 pieces of 32-pounders and 24-pounders)."

LETTER XVII.

"KARS, *July 28th*, 1855.

"Mouravieff has kept his old camps since I wrote on the 21st, but his superb cavalry has swept the villages and eaten up the growing crops for hours around us! Yesterday one of his enormous convoys of 5000 arabas and waggons passed Kars under strong escorts of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, and further guarded by skilful menaces from the bulk of his army, whose clock-like movements would shame—and perhaps instruct—any officers but Turks.

"Having heard from spies that the Russian General proposes camping nearer to our lines, I have taken every possible measure for strengthening them: and our indefatigable little infantry have, in four days' cheerful but incessant work, completed five rows of *trous-de-loups* round the whole extent of 6000 yards;* these *traps* are three feet

* Of fortifications in the plain.

deep, and as many in diameter—conical, of course—and add much to our powers of resistance, should the enemy despair of starving us out, and assault us. Although the Erzeroum roads are in the enemy's hands, yet by mountain paths we receive our estafette. I wait till the last to write; for, under such circumstances, an hour on Saturday would upset all written on Friday! Moreover, a man who is in his saddle as I am, and little rest throughout the day, steals sleep whenever he can. We are all in good health."

LETTER XVIII.

"KARS, *August 3rd*, 1855.

"Your letters of the 14th, 21st, and 28th of June, came in yesterday, for which I thank you very heartily; my recent notes will show you that your dreams of conquests and consequent honours for me are mere 'castles in the air.' Let us see what they will do for us at Constantinople or elsewhere. I have but a moment to thank you for this packet.

"The day before yesterday the Russian General broke up his great camp, and placing one half of his army (18 battalions, 1 regiment of dragoons, 2 regiments of Cossacks, and 500 irregular horse, with 40 guns) in a defensible position an hour from our lines, he again went to the mountain pass

leading to Erzeroum, giving out that he intended to go there; but this I believe to be a mere threat: his object is to devastate the country, and cut the growing corn of all kinds for his cavalry and cattle. This act of barbarity the half of his army in our front is now performing unrelentingly. Whatever may be the plans of General Mouravieff, we do not slacken our work; the Spade must be our primary weapon, and our attenuated force must then trust to their bayonets and steady fire. Believe me, our hearts never fail us; and that which would please me most would be to see those who have disgracefully neglected the common cause placed along side of us in the defence of these ramparts.

“ Until the day before yesterday, the General* in command of this corps has harassed us day and night, and manœuvred well; but he took it into his head to come within range of the guns of Kanli Tabia, the redoubt on the south-west angle of our entrenched camp, and, unlimbering his guns and massing his infantry, he made show of a rush; but our guns opened on him in admirable style, and he went off after filling his ambulances with the victims of his tom-foolery. Several officers and many men fell.

* Lieutenant-General Brumer, an officer of artillery of great merit.

“Yesterday we witnessed the funeral of a field-officer* and several men. It is now reported that the Erzeroum division of the enemy’s army, under Mouravieff, has fallen back towards Kars, and is now on this side of the Soghanlydagh. Should this be the case, my works round Erzeroum have saved that city, at least, for the present; but, if the allies do not assist us by a landing on the Georgian coast, we must, of course, fall; for the days of all beleaguered places are numbered; and, without bread and forage, no man or beast can fight. Be this as it may (I allude to the probability of assistance), we shall do our duty. All the party stand the incessant fatigue better than I could have supposed.”

LETTER XIX.

“KARS, *August 15th*, 1855.

“It was true enough that Mouravieff retired from before the Devé Boyonou pass, near Erzeroum, without an attempt to force it, which would only have brought him in face of our forts, and their siege armaments. He is now camped with his united forces, about an hour’s march from the heights, which I have recently fortified, to prevent his seeing into our rear lines of defence, which he will

* Major-General Kokalefski.

find formidable enough, should he force the former. His army musters 28 battalions of infantry, 76 guns, and 5000 cavalry, three regiments of which are superb dragoons. You must add to this, five battalions, some squadrons of irregular horse, and four guns, constantly employed in convoys of provisions from Gumri: he can muster 15,000 arabas, or country carts; in fact, he has withdrawn every man from Georgia, to pitch into this place, and an *allied* army could march from Redout-Kaláa to Tiflis. Three thousand splendid cavalry swept round us yesterday, and now block up the road *viâ* Olti. We have a few squadrons of ragged rascals, just enough to keep up the duties of the out-posts. We are all well, and in good spirits; always (of course) hoping that a demonstration will be made in our favour at Redout-Kaláa."

LETTER XX.

"KARS, August 21st, 1855.

"Since I wrote, the enemy has remained quiet; but to-day a large convoy went past from Gumri. It was accompanied by siege artillery, from which, I presume, that Mouravieff intends to bombard us. What they are doing for us at Constantinople, I know not; as, since Lord Stratford's acknowledgment of my letter, containing the news of our posi-

tion, and Mouravieff's advance, I have not had a single line ; although all my London despatches and private letters come in regularly, as the people entrusted with the packets know the mountain-passes, and manage to escape the enemy's cavalry which swarms around us. Some five thousand formed the 'division' and escort of the convoy to-day. We are changing our *barbette* batteries for *embrasures*, and taking all possible care to be ready for the enemy.

"The sun has great power ; but the nights are cold."

LETTER XXI.

"KARS, August 25th, 1855.

"We are sending off instructions to Erzeroum ; and I write this mere line to say we are all well, and that nothing has occurred since the 21st, when I last wrote to you : one day is like another. *C'est à dire*—constant annoyance from the cavalry of the enemy of the parties sent out to cut grass and barley in the ear for our horses. A circle of three hours' radius is now a complete desert ; every village abandoned, and the crops cut by the rival cavalry. You can, therefore, picture to yourself the misery endured by the peasantry. We have repressed a mutinous spirit on the part of the Laz riflemen (you know what sort of birds they are). Teesdale caught five of them robbing a village ; and they drew their

kamas, and pointed their rifles at him. I had a square formed, one side of which was composed of four hundred Laz, with their arms. The culprits were then cudgelled soundly, and their beautiful rifles and kamas *broken up with a sledge-hammer*: they are now as quiet as mice.

“The Mushir has also been induced to hang a Mussulman spy, to the joy of the whole town; and one more is condemned, and will be executed. An order to shoot all future deserters who may fall into our hands, is also published. No Courban Baïram has been celebrated, all the garrison and the townspeople standing to their arms day and night; not even a gun of salute; and thus the Russian general finds *old Turkish times* changed for the utmost vigilance.”

LETTER XXII.

“KARS, *September 1st*, 1855.

“I have received no letters from you, since I wrote to you on the 25th ultimo. Since that date I have, however, learnt that a packet of papers (news) and letters are now eighteen hours off, and remain there in consequence of the vigilance of the enemy's cavalry, which has been increased by the arrival of 2000 (Georgian levies), and which disputes every armful of forage we cut within the narrow circle

of our girdle. Nothing but skirmishing, and now and then the booming of one of our long guns, when they come too close.

“Tell Sir Hew Ross what men I have to assist me (in Colonel Lake, Teesdale, and Captain Thompson), they certainly deserve anything they may in future get for all this working and watching. I doubt if we shall ever be able to sleep out *a whole* night when the war ends.

“Mouravieff and his whole army remain in the position which my last letter left them, *c'est à dire* one hour's march from us on the Erzeroum road. Let us see if our holding out, with short commons, will bring a demonstration, and result in a relief. We are all well ; our difficulties with regard to getting our couriers past the chain of Cossacks, are much increased by the bright moonlight, but in due course of time this will cease, and we may have the pleasure of reading our friends' letters, and a newspaper too. It is now nearly a month since we got news from Erzeroum forwarding newspapers. It is quite impossible (for me at least) to write much. Eternal reports of the enemy advancing on this point.”

LETTER XXIII.

“KARS, *September 7th*, 1855.

“We succeeded on the night of the 2nd instant

in getting out of the camp and across the mountains 1500 of our famished horse. I hear the enemy captured 150 of all sorts, that is, artillery, cavalry, and bât-horses. Our blockade is rendered impassable since that night, and we now kill the poor beasts as they lose the power of working for us; to prevent fevers or pest we either bury them, or throw them into the river to float down through a deserted country. In thus losing our horses we are forced to increase the strength of our works, and we work incessantly on them.

“We have in a great degree stopped spying, by hanging two worthy Mussulmen of that noble profession. Desertion for two nights amounted to twenty-five per night, but having shot an infantry and a cavalry deserter we have put a stop to the evil for a time. *Not a culprit of either fraternity shall escape his doom.* We are on three-fifths ration of bread, but our ragged fellows work without a murmur, with their arms piled close to them. Let us see whether Turk or Ally will succour us.”

LETTER XXIV.

“KARS, *September 28th, 1855.*”

“Since I wrote to you on the 18th, I have received no letters from England, but on the 24th

we got the glorious news of the destruction of the fortress and fleet of Sebastopol; a royal salute was fired instantly, and repeated at sunset, so the Russians soon knew of their disaster. Omar Pasha is most likely now on his march towards Tiflis or Akhiska, for we heard from him two days ago, telling us that he was concentrating his troops on the Chourouk-su, and that he should himself move on with the greatest possible speed, begging us to hold out twenty days. With our economy of bread we can *do much* more than that, and would have given the Russians cold fingers ere we let them inside our lines.

“Our last enemy is Cholera, which, after inflicting much loss on the Russians, came to us three days ago, but I hope it will not prove of a virulent type. We are in capital ‘*caif*.’ For the last two days Mouravieff has been sending off his baggage towards Gumri, and even by the light of lanterns the arabas moved on that road all last night. We still *look sharp* and leave *nothing to chance*. Our little fellows are in high spirits, and would fight like devils if he tries a last gasp and rush. *Nous verrons*. We are all thin and bronzed from exposure and night-work. My sword-belt would not do its duty were it not shortened by *many* a buckle-hole; but all of us are in high spirits. The mortality amongst our horses

has been, and is, *terrible* from sheer starvation, we can with great difficulty bury them, and employ for that purpose large detachments of infantry. The country round is a desert, and all their marching parties set fire to the long grass, so as to make between us and their frontier a great gulf; but not many days will elapse ere the snow comes to cover us, and we have a starving *population* to feed all the winter; and till next harvest we will do all this, 'Inshallah' (*D. V.*)."

LETTER XXV.

"KARS, *September 29th*, 1855.

"This has been a glorious day for the Turkish arms. The Russian army attacked the heights above Kars, and on the opposite side of the river, at day-dawn; the battle lasted seven hours and a half, when the enemy was driven off in great disorder, leaving 2500 dead in front of our intrenchments, and about 4000 muskets; his numerous wounded were carried off during the fight. Let no one say in future that Turks will not fight if they are properly cared for. Colonel Lake, Major Teesdale, and Captain Thompson behaved splendidly. Teesdale was hit by a piece of spent shell, but not even his clothes torn. Churchill, as well as Zohrab and Mr. Rennison, the two interpreters, behaved most

gallantly. We are burying our dead, and must do so for the Russians. All our *tumbrils* and *pouches* have been refilled, and ready for Mouravieff, whenever he does us the honour to repeat his visit. Nobody has thought of cholera to-day. We lost 700 killed and wounded."

LETTER XXVI.

"KARS, *October 10th*, 1855.

"Since our glorious victory the enemy has sent off much of his heavy baggage and stores, but still keeps his old position, being well aware that all our cavalry horses, and a great portion of those belonging to the artillery, are dead of starvation; and that if we had a sufficient force to give him battle in the field, the two right arms are wanting to us. For four consecutive days we persevered in the burial of his dead, which literally covered the country round the field of contention. Upwards of 5000 were put under ground! so that his losses have been enormous. Mikho, a prisoner, my old servant, saw the battle from the Russian camp, and he says *they confess* to 9500. One hundred and sixty wounded and a few prisoners remain in our hands. We have four Russian wounded officers in a house near us, and they feed and live as we do, from our kitchen.

"We are stronger by three redoubts than we were

during the attack, and I do not think the Russian general will be mad enough to try his luck a second time against our position. We are so closely blocked on all sides, that I think it better to send you a duplicate of this by a Kurd, who sallies out with our foot messenger to-night; you will, of course, be very anxious, and must write to all my friends, for I have not a moment to do so.

“We hear that Omar Pasha is between Batoum and Akhiska. I have written twice to Mr. E——, first to tell him of our victory, and to-day to tell him that the enemy does not show a *decided* intention to quit his hold of us, although he has sent off much of his baggage.”

LETTER XXVII.

“KARS, October 12th, 1855.

“Many thanks for your letter of the 28th of August, which came in by a foot-messenger yesterday, through the Russian videttes, who still hold on to us with the tenacity of real Muscovites. My friends will have given you the news of our victory—one of the most sanguinary struggles of modern times—seven mortal hours of round shot, grape, and musketry, and the mountains of Armenia never before heard such music, and God forbid they ever should again! if the results are to be similarly estimated.

“The cholera has been scourging us fearfully, and I, in person, pressed on the jaded Turks in the task of burying their dead enemies, of whom 5000 were consigned to their soldier's couch. You can imagine the number of wounded. On the evening of the fourth day the last office was performed for the last Russian found on the well-contested field. The enemy thought to surprise us, but has been terribly taught that we did not begin on the 29th (Michaelmas-day,) to sleep with both eyes closed; for ten weeks I had been on the ground an hour before daylight.

“Every eye was on the stretch at the first dawn of day; their dark masses were watched in perfect silence, till they came within gunshot, when a crashing fire told them they must take the entrenchments by fighting rather than surprise. The Russian army then gave one loud hurrah, and shouted ‘Bozhna,’ (our God), but the god of battle was not with them on that eventful day. They persevered, like brave men, but the Turks resisted like lions. The Turks lost 1163 killed and wounded, and their charges with the bayonet, in retaking lost redoubts, were as dashing as their tenacity in defending them before and after these incidents of the fight. My aide-de-camp, Teesdale, had charge of the central redoubt, and fought like a lion; not a sullen one, but with sparkling eyes and

his handsome face thoroughly lighted up ; twice he sprang over the parapet and ditch of his redoubt, to lead charges with the bayonet ! Colonel Lake and Captain Thompson also played well their parts in this sanguinary drama."

LETTER XXVIII.

"KARS, *October 14th*, 1855.

"Mouravieff has again sent off a large convoy of loaded waggons and arabas to Gumri this morning, and who knows when he may go himself ? Be this as it may, I watch him night and day, and whilst his army is sadly cut up by sword and cholera, my intrenchments are stronger than on the eventful day of the battle. Every man is ready for another deadly dance of seven hours, if the Russian general so will it.

"We hear of Omar Pasha between Kutais and Akhiska, and I should think his presence, combined with our victory, will produce the speedy evacuation of this province. I have the civil administration of the town on my shoulders ; we *take* from the principal families to give to the poor, and during this present famine I am also *undertaker* of *horse funerals*, a very heavy, but not lucrative business. The cholera has nearly left us, but it took more of our infantry off than did the bullet of the enemy. The weather fine and we are all well."

LETTER XXIX.

"KARS, *October 19th*, 1855.

"Since I last wrote, the enemy has employed his land carriage in the conveyance of his wounded into Georgia; and although he holds on here with the vain hope of starving us out in a few days, he has lost the flower of his army, and every day's unnecessary delay before Kars, will be so many chances in Omar Pasha's favour. We have had no communication direct *from him* since he began his operations, but the country people report that he has taken Kutais and is operating in the direction of Gori and Tiflis. The cavalry of the enemy give us an 'alerte' three times a week; that is they gallop up in the dark and fire into our lines in front of the lower camp, and keep us out in the cold half the night. They nevertheless *keep themselves out too!* if that be any consolation to their antagonists. The spirit of the garrison is admirable, and if in an evil hour the Russian General should make a second attack, he will have even a warmer reception than on the 29th ult. We are all well and in good heart."

LETTER XXX.

"KARS, *October 25th*, 1855.

"I wrote to you six days ago, but the courier has

not yet been able to get through the Russian videttes, the nights being so bright: he will, however, try it again to-night, and I intend sending off another man in the contrary direction with duplicates of my despatches. We are of course most anxious to know *where* Omar Pasha is, and *when* Selim Pasha (now on his march from Trebizond to Erzeroum with twenty-five battalions) may come to our aid.

“The diminished infantry of Mouravieff remains as a blockading force, but it is his *cavalry* which renders him still undisputed master of the country. He knows that all our horses are dead and buried, and therefore shuts up every avenue to supplies or letters. He drives in the people who try to escape the inconvenience of hunger; and his troops lay waste the whole country with fire, and sword too where the irregulars are concerned. We shall astonish General Mouravieff by the pertinacity of our resistance, and his fingers will be cold enough ere he starve us out. In *any other* way we are ready for him, day or night.”

LETTER XXXI.

“KARS, October 31st, 1855.

“I begged Brant yesterday, by cypher, to tell you that we were all well to-day. We heard of the arrival of Selim Pasha with his advanced guard at Erzeroum. Rumours of the operations of Omar

Pasha also reached us, and I hope he is, at least, acting like a brave and resolute man ; if he does not I will mark him with my ink, in spite of his great reputation. Batoum is but four days from Kars, and six for the march of troops, but if he operates *manfully in any direction* I shall be content. The enemy for the first time showed us his diminished army yesterday, 16 battalions of from 400 to 500 each, 3 regiments of dragoons, 3 of Cossacks, and 40 pieces of artillery in line. We thought he was coming on again, and were all ready to give him a warm reception—army and townspeople being in great ‘caif’—the frosts have hitherto kept off, and although it now threatens snow, we may yet have several days fine weather for the march and operations of Selim Pasha’s army. I fear that the last two posts have fallen into the enemy’s hands. Not a private letter was sent back to us, which looks like bad news for the Russians. Our latest item of intelligence is the taking of the south side of Sebastopol.”

LETTER XXXII.

“KARS, November 1st, 1855.

“We are sending off ‘duplicates’ of the despatches which went off yesterday, and by which opportunity I wrote you a few lines to say we were

all well, that the enemy had shown his infantry for the first time since his defeat; ten battalions of from 500 to 400 each. His splendid and numerous cavalry and artillery keep him master of the desert he has made round Kars, and will do so till Selim Pasha marches from Erzeroum, where he arrived six days ago. The weather continues beautiful, and all appearance of rain or snow has passed away. Our garrison, or rather our army, is in very excellent spirits, and ready for anything it may be called upon to perform. As to cavalry it has gone down into the tomb of the Capulets. The burying of these animals has been a melancholy spectacle, but we should have had the plague as well as the cholera, had we not slaved at this Augean stable. We hear nothing of Omar Pasha; but I must conclude that he is doing his work."

LETTER XXXIII.

"KARS, November 3rd, 1855.

"We try our luck every night in getting intelligence in cypher to Brant, for transmission to Constantinople and England. To-day the enemy came with 8 battalions, 2 batteries, and 3 regiments of cavalry on the ground in front of the late attack. He brought 500 arabas to carry off the wood of the village of Shorack, which he fancied was out of the

reach of our guns. We let him enter and then opened a well-directed fire from three heavy guns; he was driven out with loss, and then set fire to it, and returned to his camp. We hope to see Selim and Veli Pashas soon, with a succouring force from Erzeroum, but have not heard from Omar Pasha for seven weeks.

“The enemy has taken down his tents and hutted himself; the nights are now getting frosty and biting. I hope we shall yet bother Mouravieff, but depend upon one thing, we will stick to our posts like ‘bricks.’ We want *cheers* from England,—*hatred* from Russia,—but *pity* from no one. There is not a long face at my table; we laugh, and joke, and trust in Providence. All our recent posts have been captured by the enemy, I mean those from Erzeroum and England; and we are consequently in utter darkness as to political and domestic intelligence. If snow falls it will greatly embarrass the enemy; but, at the same time, interfere with the advance of our succouring armies. Let the worst come we have saved Asia; for no army can, at this season, advance towards the south without imminent risk of being buried in snow.”

LETTERS OF COLONEL LAKE.

LETTER I.

“KARS, *Sunday, June 17th, 1855.*

“I must try and give you a little history of our proceedings here since I last wrote, (this day week), when I told you that the Russians were advancing upon us. I scarcely know where I left off in my last, for I wrote in such a violent hurry; nor do I know that I can very well describe all our proceedings, as I can send you no plan of the ground at present, though I hope to do so hereafter.

“I think I told you that the Russians *were* to have attacked us on Sunday last, but they did not come. They began entrenching themselves in their camp about four miles off. We heard the following day that their engineers had been to reconnoitre, and had given their opinions that unless ‘Fort Lake’ were taken it would be a hopeless case. The General decided on extending our works in that direction, and I received his orders to fortify two very high and commanding hills lying beyond, in such a manner that we might send up horse artillery batteries and chasseurs, who might retire when unable any longer to hold the position, and that the works should be *useless* to the enemy when taken,—that is to say, that they should not be able



LT COL. ATWELL LAKE, C.B.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN EDWARD MAYALL.



to employ them against *us*. This was no easy matter, and I dare say you can scarcely understand my explanations.

“The hills are to the westward of Fort Lake, and are distant, one about 200 yards and the other about 700 yards from ‘Fort Lake.’ I took up 6000 or 7000 men with me, and in two days the works were completed, and quite approved of by the General. It was hard work for me I can tell you; for I had to lay them down with my own hands, and I am now about the colour of an Ethiopian serenader. I also had to connect ‘Fort Lake’ with the other three hill batteries by a breast-work, and a small flèche for light guns. This line was a mile and a half long.

“Now I must ‘hark back’ a little, and tell you what occurred in the mean time. I know you will not think me egotistical if you find the personal pronoun too often used. My duty has been, as I think I told you, to visit the cavalry outposts, and the patrols round the works by night, which exactly takes me three hours.

“I begin at a little before midnight, and get home a few minutes before 3 A.M., when (until last night), I have to mount a fresh horse and accompany the General to inspect the whole of the troops under arms. I then return to breakfast at 8 o’clock, having previously set the men to work at the forti-

fications. Immediately after breakfast I start for the hills and other works, and do not get back again until seven, the dinner hour, except when the General requires me to go any where with him. At a little before 9 P.M., I get to my room, when I throw myself on my bed in my clothes and sleep well until midnight. Schaller then brings me a cup of tea, and in five minutes I am in the saddle. It cannot be helped, for I am the only English officer *below*, Major Teesdale and Captain Thompson having to remain at their respective posts on the hills.

“The General never spares himself. He has virtually assumed the command of the army in addition to his duties as Her Majesty’s Commissioner, and of course he places all his trust in the three English officers. The doctor insisted that I was trying to do too much, and spoke to the General, who has for the last two mornings dispensed with my attending him at three. I therefore now turn in at that hour regularly, and sleep till six, which is all I require. I have no time for sleep in the day, and scarcely ever see the inside of my room. My tent is pitched near those of the troops, but I do not occupy it, as we all dine with the General.

“Now I must revert to Wednesday night the 13th, and tell you of a little adventure which will interest you. I started on my rounds as usual, accompanied by the Doctor instead of my inter-

preter. As he was very anxious to see the Russian camp, and he speaks the Turkish language, I gladly availed myself of his offer, and gave Mr. Zohrab a holiday, for he is of course as hard worked as I am, seeing that I can go nowhere without him, except when I am with the General, who has his own interpreter. We commenced with the patrols round the works, so as to get to the cavalry outposts at daylight, that we might have a good view of the Russian camp. When we got to the place where our reserve ought to have been, I could not see it. It should have been about four miles from this, and I was alarmed, thinking it must have been cut off by the enemy during the night. I halted my little party, and sent out a couple of mounted troopers to look over a hill in our front. After some time one of them came back and said he saw the reserve at some distance ahead; we therefore proceeded, and came up with the party just as day was dawning, and they were calling in the videttes. We were then about two miles from the Russians, and it was that peculiar kind of light, the grey dawn, which renders it so difficult to see far. We were talking about the best position from which to get a good view of the camp, when the Doctor, who has wonderfully long sight, called out that he saw a regiment of Russian dragoons moving on our right flank. We thought nothing of it, as

it seemed such a long way off, until we soon saw it moving faster and faster towards us. We then retired in order, and joined our support, which we had left a short distance in the rear.

“Our *whole* party consisted only of 200 of our wretchedly armed and worse mounted regular cavalry, and less than 100 Bashi-Bazooks. The latter seemed at first desirous of showing fight, but the idea of so small a party standing against a whole regiment of well-mounted and well-disciplined troops like the Russian dragoons, was so utterly ridiculous, that it was decided we should retire. At this moment we saw the dragoons beginning to charge, and though, for some short time, our detachments were tolerably steady, the Bashi-Bazooks, being seized with a panic, rushed headlong on, and broke the ranks of our cavalry, who shared at once in the panic, and off they went helter-skelter full gallop, and we could not rally them. They passed me like lightning, the Russians rapidly gaining on us till within shot, when they discharged their carbines, and the balls went whizzing over our heads. Several of our men were killed and all the wounded cut to pieces. I never saw such brutal butchery in my life. One of our poor fellows was thrown from his horse, which ran away. I saw him in a frantic state calling for help, but nothing could be done, and

when the dragoons came up they cut him to pieces, though he kept calling out *amān amān* (mercy). This shows what monsters men can be when their worst passions are stirred up. Baron Swartzenburg, an Austrian officer, commanded the party (the Turks, I mean), but was wholly unable to rally them until we got on the brow of a hill, when they formed up in line, and faced the Russians, who had begun to slacken their speed, and occupied a position on a ridge opposite to us. At this moment we saw, to our surprise, two more large bodies of the enemy rise up on our right and left flanks, with guns and infantry; so that it was evidently the intention of the enemy to cut us off, and nothing but the wonderful pace at which our party went, over most dangerously rocky ground, saved the whole from total annihilation.

“I was mounted on ‘Ayesha,’ who behaved beautifully. It was the first time she had been under fire, and her steadiness surprised me. I sent off a mounted orderly instantly to General Williams to send us some more cavalry and a troop of horse artillery, and while we were waiting on the hill, looking at the enemy on the opposite one, the Bashi-Bazooks on both sides went into the valley between, and began skirmishing and firing at each other. The sun was just rising, and I never gazed on a more picturesque scene. They sent us a troop of horse

artillery and three regiments of cavalry, but before they came up the enemy had retired, fearing, I suppose, too near an approach to the guns of our forts.

“Thus ended the morning’s amusement, and *very* exciting it was, I can assure you. Schaller, who heard of it, at once saddled ‘the Hostage,’ and rode him out to me, thinking I might want a fresh horse, which in truth I did, for ‘Ayesha’ had had a pretty good time of it. I had been on her for eight hours without dismounting. A report got about that I was killed ; but I was not touched.

“We lost eight men, I think—all cut about in a horrid manner—and a few horses. The loss of the enemy I cannot calculate at all. Our cavalry is *fearfully* bad, and not to be trusted. Their arms are execrable, and this branch is altogether in a most demoralised state ; but the artillery and infantry are really excellent. My belief is, that the enemy moved out of their camp to make a reconnaissance, and, seeing us, they made a dash. All this occurred in the direction of Gumri. We saw no more of them that day.

“On Friday we heard that they were preparing for an attack on us ; and yesterday morning, at about half-past six, whilst I was dressing, having been out on night duty, a man rushed in to say that the Russians were in full march on us. I mounted as

fast as I could, and stationed myself in Hafiz Pasha Battery; the General, Major Teesdale, and Captain Thompson going to Kara-Dàgh, the highest point. When I got to the Battery, I found the enemy steadily advancing towards that line between the two batteries which I have already named. They were marching in excellent order; and a splendid sight it was. A fine clear morning, the sun was shining brightly, and our troops were in excellent spirits. The enemy kept driving in our out-lying cavalry pickets, who, however, held their own for some time, assisted by the Bashi-Bazooks. They then threw out their dragoons and Cossacks to the right, who were kept at bay by our Bashi-Bazooks, while our cavalry retired. At last the Russian cavalry charged; the rest of the army steadily advancing on us. They drove our cavalry to within a mile of our works, when, perceiving that they were within range of our batteries, we opened fire upon them, and now the work began in earnest.

“ Our artillery practice was excellent; and the fire ploughed with deadly precision through their ranks. The game was commenced by a gun from Arab Battery, taken up by Kara-Dàgh, and immediately followed by mine in Hafiz Pasha. I could see through my glass where every shot dropped, and we only sent *one* which fell short—a shell which

was fired by mistake. Our breastwork was manned, and no one ever witnessed a finer sight. The Cossacks, though under a most murderous fire from three batteries, persisted in trying to come on, and some of the troops strove to get between Arab Battery and Karadagh ; but our riflemen were thrown out along the rocks, and by a brisk and well sustained fusillade kept them off. All this took place while the enemy were firing guns and rockets at us, and we were peppering them famously. The fire from the hill batteries was too plunging to have the same effect as ours, as the balls could not ricochet.

“The Russian infantry kept out of fire entirely, or their loss would have been fearful. This little affair lasted about an hour and a half, when the Russians found they had quite enough, and reluctantly retired. The discipline of their troops must be splendid from the way they fought under such a continued and well-directed fire from our guns. We blazed away without ceasing. You may fancy the courage this has given our men, and they say now that double the number of troops may come on as fast as they like.

“The enemy had on the field, 25,000 troops and 54 guns (some say only 48). They also brought with their reserve three days' biscuit for their troops, evidently intending to make a business of it, but

they got more than they bargained for, and have retired into their former encampment about eight miles or somewhat less from this. Our loss was only 31 men and about eight horses. It is impossible to calculate correctly the loss of the enemy. It has, however, been estimated at about 150 men; and judging from what I saw myself, I should say it was fully that number. I took a burying party out after it was over, and buried all we found. Many horses were lying dead and wounded on the plain, and we picked up several of our own cannon balls. The difficulty was to make our fellows cease firing after the enemy were out of range. General Williams was very well pleased with the affair, and the troops are in high spirits. We did not follow up the enemy, as we have only about 18,000 available troops, and our cavalry is *utterly* useless.

“You can have no idea how much the higher as well as the lower order of Turks look to General Williams and his three English officers.

“If you see in the London newspapers any account of our ‘*petite affaire*,’ you will be very well satisfied that it is not mine, but from the pen of ———, who as there is no special correspondent on the spot, volunteers some amateur writing, which will doubtless be acceptable.

“I am happy to tell you that there prevails among us the most thorough unanimity, and that we

associate on the pleasantest terms. We all live with the General. Nothing can exceed his hospitality and kindness. Thompson and Teesdale are very fine fellows and excellent officers. Indeed we are quite 'a happy family' here. I had 'the Hostage' on duty during the fight, but I was chiefly in the battery.

"I was on duty from a quarter to twelve to a quarter to three last night and this morning, and shall be similarly engaged every night while the Russians remain here. We hear they are coming on again in a day or two, to attack us on the other side; and, since I began this, we have received a report that they were marching on us. The troops were under arms, and all the batteries re-armed; but it turned out to be a false alarm. I wish they would come and get their *quietus* at once. We are looking for reinforcements, and then I hope we shall take Georgia. I am in *most excellent* health, and never felt better in my life. I believe that the constant mental excitement keeps up the health and spirits. Schaller takes *great care* of me, and makes his best *salâam*. He looked *so* happy when I came home safe the other morning. He brought me something to eat in the battery yesterday, and was delighted to see the Russians. He is as great a fidget as ever about the horses, and actually did not want me to have 'Ayesha' the other night.

She was lying down, and he did not like to wake her. To-day he has been blacking 'Cossack's hoofs, and curling his mane; and was quite annoyed because I took him out before the mane was quite right. He turns out my horses to the admiration of everyone.

"How you will laugh at our *small* war when you read of the great doings in the Crimea; but I can tell you, if Kars is taken, ALL this territory is lost."

LETTER II.

"KARS, *Thursday, June 21st.*

"My last to you was dated, I think, Sunday, the 17th, and gave a hasty account of our little engagement, and also of my hurried escape from about 3000 Russians, with a small band of 200 indifferent cavalry, and a sprinkling of Bashi-Bazooks.

"I have just come from the batteries, where there was a report of the enemy on the move; and I can now manage to sit down, and steal half an hour from my work, to tell you of all that has occurred since my last. After driving the enemy off on Saturday the 16th, they retired to their former encamping-ground, about eight miles away. On Sunday a report came in, that the Russians were marching round on 'Fort Lake,' in force. Our troops were placed in

position immediately, and all the guns manned ; but it proved to be a false alarm. The garrison, however, remained under arms, and half the troops slept in the batteries and trenches all night. I visited the patrols as usual at midnight, and rode about until morning.

“ On the following day, Monday, the 18th, the enemy appeared in full force, marching in front of the line of breastwork between Hafiz Pasha and Kara-Dàgh batteries, but of course out of range of our guns. We remanned all our works instantly, sent out strong detachments of cavalry, and then looked quietly on. It was a lovely bright day, and as the Russian army marched along the undulating ground, sometimes half disappearing and then reappearing in full force, with the enormous trains of baggage, and their bayonets glistening in the sun, I thought it was indeed too splendid a sight to bring with it so much misery and desolation.

“ I remained in the batteries the whole day looking at the army through my telescope. They halted once to rest, but only for a very short time, and then changed their front and faced towards us as if about to attack. At last, towards sunset, they again halted on the slope of a hill exactly facing Kara-Dàgh battery, and about two miles and a quarter from it. In less than half an hour their camp sprung up as if by magic, and, as the shades

of night fell, their watch-fires blazed, and I could almost fancy them near enough for me to feel their warmth, I being at the time miserably cold, for the weather was by that time indulging in rain and sleet. We had no fear of an attack that night; for the enemy had been marching since 1 A.M., with scarcely any intermission. This would have been the time to have pounced upon them, if we could have relied on our troops, but with their 7000 splendid cavalry, and our miserable 1500 it would have been madness.

“We posted our cavalry videttes, and infantry patrols, as near as was prudent to the enemy's camp, and they did the same. I went on duty a little before midnight, and visited all the posts. It rained nearly the whole night, and I did not return to my quarters until 6 A.M., wet, cold, and tired. After dressing, and getting some breakfast, I endeavoured to strengthen our works, and I think that each day I shall be able to do some little to them.

“The enemy were quiet all day, and had a parade in the evening. They sent out detachments to try and cut off our supplies, but there is still a circuitous route by which we communicate with Erzeroum, and, luckily, towards evening several hundreds of horses and carts laden with ammunition and supplies succeeded in coming in safe, as well as some irregular reinforcements. I went

out at midnight and came in at 4 A.M. (Wednesday), when there was a false alarm respecting the enemy, which, luckily, was contradicted before the troops were turned out. We keep *half* the troops always on duty in the batteries and trenches. Yesterday (Wednesday) all seemed quiet until about 4 P.M. I had been out the whole day engaged in tracing some new defences, when I saw troopers riding frantically about; some saying that our out-posts were driven in, and that the enemy were advancing in three columns, whilst others insisted that they were coming round by Fort Lake; in short, most confused statements got about. However, I went to the front, and we found that a detachment had gone away towards the Erzeroum road, consisting of four regiments of infantry, two of cavalry, and some guns. All the rest had paraded and formed in two columns, and there was evidently a stir in their camp. Just at that moment rain came on, of a description such as I have never before seen—a regular small deluge, which continued until half an hour after midnight, when I began to go my rounds.

“I must now tell you a semi-ludicrous anecdote about a late occurrence. You must know that Dr. Sandwith, the Inspector General of Hospitals, is very fond of going out with me at night, in order to let my interpreter, Mr. Zohrab, rest, as he is

with me all day. Last night we started as usual, accompanied by two of my cavalry orderlies. We had to cross a stream, which was swollen enormously in consequence of the rain, over a very narrow wooden bridge, covered with greasy mud, and with no side-rails or parapets to it. I rode 'Ayesha' (who has become very steady at night), and she got over very cleverly, although it was perfectly dark. Immediately after I had crossed I heard a splash, but at the moment did not think anything of it; however I called out to the doctor, but getting no answer I turned round, and called again (my two orderlies having gone on before to show the way, which was difficult to find in the dark), I then heard a splashing and a half-stifled cry, begging me to get off my horse and come to the doctor's assistance. His horse had slipped on the bridge, and both had fallen into the stream, which was about eight feet deep.

"I alighted, but could not for the life of me see where he was. At last with the assistance of an orderly, who came to the rescue, we lugged out my half-drowned friend, but his horse swam quietly down the stream, and was not picked up for some time, when he was found to be very much cut and bruised. The Doctor, however, fortunately escaped with a ducking. I took him home, turned out my own interpreter, and proceeded on my rounds.

“Teesdale and Thompson sleep in the Hill Forts, and there is no one left to do the duty below but myself. As for our Turkish friends, there is scarcely an officer amongst them whom you can trust, and to give you an idea of the opinion of the Mushir respecting them, he always asks where I am at night, and says, that as long as I am out, he feels quite safe. The Mushir is very fond of me, and is pleased to say, he places great confidence in me. Of course, such appreciation, from such a man, is most pleasing.

“This is scarcely the city of rest. I may say, that, with the exception of one night, when the Doctor insisted on the General persuading me to do so, I have never been regularly to bed since the first attack, and I have become so accustomed to snatch repose, that I never expect to sleep through a whole night again! I am in *most excellent* health, and have really and truly never felt so well in my life. I have an appetite that would astonish you, and I like the *excitement* of the thing beyond measure. There is plenty of active work, and plenty of material for reflection, if you can find time for it.

“The General and I get on very well, and I believe he has twice mentioned me in his despatches.

“Schaller is most attentive and is a perfect

treasure, he sleeps in the stable, and has one horse always ready saddled for me. He thinks I am grown *thin*, and I believe I am, but I could afford that!

“The more I look at this place, the more impracticable does it seem, and I am certain that we shall drive off the enemy, though the siege may be a long one.

“I fancy Mouravieff’s plan is to try a *coup-de-main*, and if he does, I should say he would lose five thousand men, at his first attempt.

“We have three months provisions in store, and they cannot cut off our communication with the Kars river.

“I told you I think that the Russian engineers have reconnoitered, and give it as their opinion that until they take ‘Fort Lake’ they can do nothing. Yesterday and to-day we received further reinforcements—several hundred Arab Bashi-Bazooks, and seven hundred irregular riflemen, equal to double the number of some of our regular troops. In less than a week we expect four thousand capital troops, from a place beyond Batoum, on the Black Sea. If we continue to augment our numbers we shall soon be able to act on the defensive and try to take Georgia.

“I have become nearly black. The General has wisely insisted on our all three wearing the Fez

whenever anything is going on, as the Russians would inevitably pick us off, if they recognised us, and the consequence is our faces are *scorched*. I have suffered agonies from my skin blistering. I am half ashamed of writing so much about myself.

“The General’s secretary is quite an artist, and has just taken an admirable likeness of Captain Thompson; he has promised to take some sketches of this place, which I shall send to you.”

“*Saturday 23rd.*”

“Well, here we are nearly in the same state; the enemy looking at us all day, and we looking at him. He gives us an alarm about twice a day, by turning out his troops, but it generally ends in four or five thousand of them going for fuel and provisions to neighbouring villages, and the rest turning in again.

“The rain continues almost incessantly, which prevents the Russians coming on to an attack. It is all in our favour, as we continue to strengthen our works, and at the same time have a better chance of reinforcements.

“Some of the irregular troops, lately arrived, are very fine fellows; each man armed with a very formidable long dagger, and a beautiful rifle. They are dressed like Swiss Jagers, and look most picturesque. They are splendid marksmen, and

cool determined fellows : five hundred have arrived, and eleven hundred more are to come to-morrow or next day. If the Russians do not make haste and attack us we shall be in a state to attack them.

“One of the Bashi-Bazook chiefs named Hadji Temir Agha, is a great friend of mine. He is a fine handsome old man. He wanted to present me with a horse the other day, giving me the pick of his stud, and was quite hurt that I would not accept one. The rain here is the most fearful thing I ever saw, and the whole country is inundated. It makes our night duties anything but pleasant ; but I now turn in about 4 A.M., and sleep soundly till seven.

“I must leave off and finish this to-morrow when the Post goes. I hope we shall succeed in keeping open our postal communication at all events. The direct road to Erzeroum is already closed to us, but we have a way over the mountains. You must excuse me if I am guilty of repetition, for I have so much that is of great moment to think of.

“The enemy has sent to Gumri for eight siege guns, which are said to have arrived within a few miles of their camp. This looks as if they meditated a regular siege. They have been pretty well convinced that a *coup de main* is out of the question.”

LETTER III.

“KARS, *October 2nd*, 1855.

“I sent you a few hasty lines just after our affair of the 29th ult. ; and I must now try and give you a better account. But it will be difficult to explain every thing without a plan.

“I have no time to draw even a sketch, for I have to make one for the General by to-morrow afternoon to send to Lord Clarendon with his despatch ; and I have so many other things to attend to, that I really have not a moment to myself.

“The little sketch you already have, will be of no use in enabling you to understand all that occurred ; for the principal assault took place on the heights to the westward of Fort Lake, where I have been constructing numerous works. However, I will try my best at a description.

“For many days there have been movements in the enemy's camp betokening a final departure. These, combined with the fall of Sebastopol, the arrival of Omar Pasha, the approach of winter, and many minor circumstances, gave us the idea that the siege would speedily be raised. Still we kept a good look-out ; and I continued adding to the works, having completed a battery only a very short time ago, which was found most useful, and without

which the fate of the day might have been very different.

“I had, as I told you, only been a very short time in bed, after returning from my usual nightly rounds, when I was awoke by hearing guns. Schaller insisted on it that I was dreaming, and only heard doors banging. However, I jumped up and began to dress, while he got my horse ready. In a minute I heard the General calling out to me, telling me we were attacked. This was about half-past four, half an hour before daylight. Guns seemed to be fired in the direction of Kanli battery and the heights called Tachmasb.

“I galloped off as hard as I could to the former, and found a force in front of it, out of range of our guns, consisting chiefly of cavalry and artillery, hidden from our view by a ridge, and only seen by getting on a height. I at once knew this was not meant for the grand attack, but for a feint; so after ordering that the fire should not be returned, unless the force came very much nearer, I mounted again, leaving the Russians firing away merely to distract our attention, and prevent our sending all our troops up to the heights.

“The firing at Tachmasb, which could only be seen through the darkness by the flashing of the guns, told me, by hearing musketry, that the enemy were close upon the batteries. I never heard such

sharp firing in my life, and I knew it was in earnest. I rode off to Tchim Battery (now called Vassif Pasha Battery); and as it was by this time nearly daylight, I could see that the attack was on the left flank of the Tachmasb line of breastwork. I therefore ordered two heavy guns to be directed to this point, and to fire on the enemy's artillery, which had unlimbered, and were keeping up a sharp fire on Tachmasb Battery. Just at this moment I heard Fort Lake open fire, and all the English batteries; and almost immediately afterwards the roll of musketry told me that the enemy must be close on the works. An aide-de-camp came rushing down directly afterwards to say, the English batteries had been taken by the enemy.

“I knew they were badly manned, and though I felt that the loss was great, I did not despair. The bulk of our force was at Tachmasb, and we had no men to spare for these works.

“The enemy having got within the English lines, began to blaze away at Fort Lake, and to shell the town, evidently knowing from our deserters the exact position of our large magazine in the citadel.

“General Williams had desired me to remain in Tchim Battery as being central, and a good place from which to annoy the enemy, thinking also that until Tachmasb fell the enemy would not attack Fort Lake. However, no time was to be lost, so,

as soon as I found the enemy was in possession of part of our works, I rode off and luckily got safe into Fort Lake.

“As soon as our troops were driven from the English batteries, they retired into two works I have only lately constructed, Williams Pasha battery and another which is not yet named. At the same moment Captain Thompson who commanded the hill forts on the opposite bank of the river, called Arab battery, and Kara-Dagh opened a well directed fire against the Russian artillery who were, as I said, shelling the town and pitching into Fort Lake.

“We opened a fire from Fort Lake at the same moment, but having only one gun in position calculated to fire in that direction, some little time elapsed ere we could do as much execution as we wished. However, we soon got two more guns run up to bear upon the enemy, and drove their artillery out of the English batteries and beyond the breastwork.

“By this time reinforcements had come up to us, and four companies of riflemen (Chasseurs) which I had sent on from Tchim battery before I left came to the front, and a hand to hand fight commenced between the Russian infantry and ours, the large guns still firing at the retreating artillery. I must here tell you, *en parenthèse*, that the regiments of Russian

dragoons had previously charged the breastwork, but I had taken the precaution of protecting every line of entrenchment by five rows of *trous-de-loup*. Unprepared for this, the dragoons were taken aback, and coming up to the charge, they all fell head over heels, and our men behind the breastwork shot a great number of them down. This was before we lost the lines.

“Well, after a good deal of skirmishing and fighting, our troops now and then being driven back, and then advancing, we finally drove the enemy out at the point of the bayonet, and as the columns formed up, and retreated down the hill, we hastened their departure with the big guns of Fort Lake. At the same time I rode off to the furthest English battery, in front of which the dragoons still remained, and having by this time recovered several of the guns (which the enemy had taken away, but left at some distance when they lost the batteries), and got them into position, we drove the whole body into the valley, but not till we had done a good deal of execution.

“I must here mention that all the guns which were taken we recovered, except three, and I still hope to find them. They spiked those they could not take away, with ramrods, which we soon extracted.

“In this affair we lost a good many men and

officers. Among the latter the colonel of one of the regiments, and a major and fifteen men were killed at Fort Lake. Thirty-seven irregular riflemen of Lagistan fell behind the breastwork, and I suppose one or two hundred of our men, but the returns are not yet made out.

“The enemy suffered considerably.

“To show that there was no want of pluck in losing the batteries, I must tell you that in one of them I found 63 Russians lying dead, and in another nearly 70. The ditch was strewn with them, and after the action, when we buried them, we counted 360 dead bodies in and about this position. But this is a mere drop in the ocean, to what fell elsewhere. Moreover, those who were killed by our guns at a distance have not yet been counted. Many fine horses belonging to the enemy also fell in front of these works.

“I have now told you precisely what happened under my own observation.

“My interpreter, Mr. Zohrab, accompanied me wherever I went, and also acted as my A. D. C. in carrying orders. All the time this work was going on at the English batteries, the fighting at Tachmasb never ceased for a moment, and most nobly did our troops defend the forts. Major Teesdale is always stationed up there; and so at the commencement he went into Yuksek battery,

and did his work right well. He is a fine young fellow, and was in the thick of it.

“Hussein Pasha, a Circassian general, defended Tashmasb Fort and lines, and General Kméty, an Hungarian, commanded the whole of those heights. When planning those works, I never anticipated their being held so long. My object was to make them a kind of stepping-stone to Fort Lake, which is, undoubtedly, the key to the whole position.

“I knew that the Russians must lose a certain number of men at Tachmasb before reaching Fort Lake; but General Williams and myself, when consulting on the subject, proposed first of all, merely to make an entrenched line for horse artillery and chasseurs, who could retire on Fort Lake when hard pressed by the enemy. This was accordingly done; but one thing led to another, and work succeeded work, until it became a strong position.

“Evidently Mouravieff thought that, while we were defending those heights in advance, he could come up, unnoticed by us, and take ‘Fort Lake,’ which was naturally his primary object.

“But to return to the attack. The enemy were not long in turning the left flank of the Tachmasb lines (and here they took one of our guns from the open flèche). It was while they were in this posi-

tion that we brought our cross-fire on them from Vassif Pasha and One Gun battery—which latter was under the able direction of Mr. Churchill. I cannot of course describe this part of the attack as well as the other, as I could not see the whole of it owing to the smoke. However, the enemy got in rear of Tachmasb battery as well as in front, and brought their guns to bear upon it, but never succeeded in breaching it. Our troops made sundry sorties, and attacked the Russians with the bayonet, as I saw quite plainly from the wounds on the dead bodies. Column after column was swept away by our guns and musketry, which never ceased for a moment; and as fast as they retired, fresh reinforcements of the enemy came up, and met the same fate; until General Mouravieff, who stood on a hill at some distance looking on, had no more troops to bring up.

“We knocked over numbers of artillery horses with the cross-fire from Vassif Pasha and ‘One Gun’ battery, and ‘Fort Lake’—and, in short, they caught it on all sides. While this was going on, Yuksek battery, under Teesdale, was as vigorously attacked, and the enemy equally well repulsed. At the same time an attempt was made to take the rifle lines to the right of the position, and in this one spot we counted 850 dead Russians! Another column of infantry tried to get round from

Tachmasb by Ichakmak, apparently to reinforce the column which was retreating from the English batteries. They were met by a small body of our Chasseurs thrown out on a rocky hill, who stood their ground nobly. At the same moment I caught sight of them from 'Fort Lake,' and brought my large guns to bear on the column, doing much mischief. They then went round and got under the fire of another battery. General Kmety finding himself hard pressed, now sent an A. D. C. to me for assistance. I sent him a battalion of infantry, and four companies of picked men. On their way from 'Fort Lake,' they were joined by two more battalions sent up by General Williams from below. The whole of them went gallantly forward and put an end to the affair. They attacked the Russians on their left flank, and drove them down the hill in the greatest disorder, followed for some distance by our troops. The enemy's guns once turned round, unlimbered, and fired, and then finally retreated. Thus ended, I think I may say (as I was only a small actor in it) as decisive an affair as any one need wish to see.

"I found a poor young officer of Russian Chasseurs, stripped, all but his shirt and drawers, sitting against a parapet, with his eye hanging out on his cheek, a ball having entered the eye, and passed out behind the ear. I bound up his eye with my hand-

kerchief, put him on the horse of one of my orderly dragoons, and sent him down to the hospital. I have since seen him, and he is doing well; but his eye is gone, of course. He tells me he is only twenty years of age; he is rather good-looking and gentlemanlike. His colonel I saw lying in the ditch of Yuksek battery, with his horse beside him. I rode all over the field afterwards; and, if I had not seen it with my own eyes, I should have disbelieved what I am now going to tell you.

“ We recommenced burying the dead the same afternoon. First of all our own. We lost in killed and wounded between one thousand and eleven hundred, among them several officers.

“ Up to this time, and this is the fifth day, though we have kept several regiments constantly employed, we have not yet finished this mournful occupation. The accounts to-day show six thousand, three hundred and odd, actually buried of the Russians. This does not include those who fell at a distance; some of whom were carried off by the enemy, and others are still lying in all directions. I rode about yesterday, and found bodies without number, in various spots.

“ We have only two hundred and odd wounded Russians in our hospital.

“ I saw the enemy taking their wounded away all the time of the attack; and, a deserter who came in

to-day, says that two thousand carts (which I saw) started yesterday for Gumri, laden with wounded; and that two-thirds of the Russian infantry are *hors-de-combat*.

“We have seen officers’ funerals going on every day in their camps; and I believe a great number of them fell during the action. The Erivansky regiment, one of their crack corps, only brought three hundred and fifty men out of action. We have four wounded Russian officers here, all nice-looking young men. They are lodged in a house close to us, and are fed from our table. They say Mouravieff told them they would take Kars with the greatest ease.

“No one in the Russian camp knew of the intended attack until nine o’clock the previous night. I suppose that, having besieged us for four months, Mouravieff was ashamed of going away without a final attack.

“Now, if he has to meet Omar Pasha, he will have to encounter a fresh army (in good spirits) of forty-five thousand men; his own force being considerably cut up.

“I believe the Russians had altogether thirty thousand troops engaged, the flower of the Caucasian army. We had under seven thousand engaged, not one squadron of cavalry; for most of our horses have been killed, and few remained even for our guns.

If we had only two regiments of cavalry, and a few artillery horses, we might have followed up the enemy, and done them enormous damage.

“I think for badly clothed, disorganised, undisciplined troops, who have for some time been on less than half rations, the army of Kars has done wonders.

“You will not be surprised at my feeling a little pride at my works answering so well, when I tell you that every single battery and line that I have constructed on the heights was more or less engaged, and the injury done to them is very trifling. They were so placed as to give flanking fire in every direction, and no troops could stand it.

“The Russians stood their ground manfully. A finer army never came up to a place, and I cannot but grieve to think of its fate.

“As for the Mushir, his joy was unbounded. When I came below after the affair was over, he took me by both hands, and, turning to the General, he said, ‘I was always very fond of the Meer Ali Bey (colonel), but I do not know what I can say to him now.’

“General Colman, *chef d'état* major, insisted on kissing me on the cheek. I must say the Turks are very grateful to us. More than first meets the thoughts depended on our holding this place. Kars, once lost, Asia Minor would very soon have been in

the hands of the Russians, and we all know with whom Persia would have sided.

“Now if Omar Pasha deserves the praise lavished on him, he will walk into Tiflis unmolested, and take Georgia. Instead of having to encounter Mouravieff, with thirty-five thousand splendid troops, he will meet only the balance of the army, and that balance very considerably dispirited. Whether Mouravieff wishes it or not, he is unable to move just yet. He is sending off thousands of carts every day heavily laden with his stores and ammunition (the bulk of it at least); but he cannot leave his wounded. I daresay, in a few days he will decamp.

“General Williams will go at once to Erzeroum, and he leaves me here in charge of the garrison; he has promised to relieve me soon, and not keep me here during the winter. I forgot to tell you the action lasted about seven hours and a half, during which time there was not a moment's cessation in the firing.

“The Karslees, or civil inhabitants of Kars, a fine bold race of men, proverbial for hereditary gallantry, and very different to the inhabitants of Erzeroum, fought nobly in defence of their household gods.

“I have picked up a few relics, such as small brass charms, medals, &c., and will send them

home to you to keep in memory of this eventful day.

“I have been called on by the Mushir for a design for a medal for ‘Kars,’ and I have sent him one which is highly approved of, and he is sending it to the Sultan.

“The two nights following the attack I patrolled all night till day broke, for we did not know the extent of the Russian losses, and I fancied they might come on again.

“I have had to draw a sketch for the General to send home, and to see after the repairs of the works, &c.

“We have had very heavy rain during the last twelve hours, which will puzzle the Russian guns in going home.

“General Williams is very much pleased with the result of this campaign, and thanked us all when the action was over.

“Now, I think, I must finish this very long letter. It is but a poor account, it being difficult to describe everything. I leave out all the horrors purposely, but some day I will tell you many an anecdote. Schaller looked so happy when I came home; he is as perfect and faithful an attendant as any man ever had.

“I must now tell you that the force in front of Canli battery was only intended, as I thought, for

a feint, and it kept on firing throughout the action, but merely to draw off our attention—it was only cavalry and artillery.

“They say that Mouravieff had the whole of his infantry engaged, and that he did not even leave a guard in his camps. He mistrusted his Persian Irregular Horse and sent them off on an excursion the previous day. They were too wide awake for him, however, and, during the attack, they returned and plundered his camps of plate and everything they could lay their hands on. This is the report, I cannot vouch for its truth.

“Neither Thompson, Teesdale, nor myself were touched, fortunately, or I should say providentially. I need not tell you what my thoughts are on this subject, or how fully I recognise the hand of God in all that has occurred here during the last four months.

“Our hospitals are crowded, and when I went to one of them the night of the 29th, I saw heaps of wounded lying with broken limbs on the ground, and fearful wounds. No beds to be found for so many, and no accommodation.

“Dr. Sandwith is unremitting in his exertions, but the apathy of the Turk is not to be overcome even by such an event as this. Cholera patients too, coming in all the time, and all huddled up together. I am happy to say cholera has not gained

ground so rapidly as we might have expected, and I trust we shall shake it off.

“The post does not go until to-morrow, so I will add a few lines if any change takes place in the Russian camps.

“Saturday Oct. 6th.—The General has been afraid of sending off a post, as we are still surrounded by the enemy, and he would not like the details of the battle to fall into their hands, but I believe he will send a Tartar off to day.

“It is impossible for the Russians to get away, I imagine, for a day or two, for Mouravieff cannot leave his wounded, and many cannot be moved. He seems to be burying officers every day—dying of their wounds I suppose. Deserters who have come in say he has lost 300 officers, among them many of high rank. They say he has 15,000 men *hors-de-combat*! Up to the night before last the numbers buried by us amounted to 6500 and odd. I do not know if there are any more since.

“Our loss in killed and wounded was 1092, exclusive of the townspeople (who lost 101), and of Bashi-Bazooks, the number of whom I know not. It has been very hard work burying the dead, and many regiments have been employed in doing it since the battle. All the dead horses had to be removed.

“Every day we have news that we are to be again

attacked, and it keeps us on the *qui vive* day and night. I do not myself well see how they can come on again. If they do, we are quite prepared to repeat the dose.

“I have been erecting a new battery, and have had no time to go and see the wounded Russian officers, but I sent Schaller. They are in small houses near us, and live from our table. One is dying, two going on well, and the other prisoner is not severely wounded.

“I fear I am guilty of a great deal of repetition, but I am so often interrupted. You will never be able to get through this long letter.

“I have just heard from the General that the post will not go until to-morrow night, so I may, perhaps, be able to tell you more about the enemy's movements.

“10th October.—We have been so surrounded ever since the day after the battle that we have been unable to send off a post. The General meant to try and get one off to-night. I have not seen the General's despatch, so I do not know what he says.

“We see *signs* of the enemy's moving, but he still sticks fast; the truth is, with so many wounded and so many dying daily, besides cholera raging in his camp, it is difficult to get away, and it is a large force to move.

“We had an alarm on Monday night, and I was

up at 'Fort Lake' all night; snow, rain and bitter cold. I cannot think they will attack again, but we hear they will. If they do, they will find I have made three new batteries, two finished, and one in progress. We are not a bit afraid of him, as you may imagine, but still our hospitals are so crowded I should be glad to see him depart.

"We have no authentic intelligence of Omar Pasha's movements, but we hear he is at Akhiska, four marches from hence.

"I am very well: thank God! cholera is leaving us fast, but it has thinned our ranks fearfully. Our wounded are dying daily; the Russians are burying theirs too, every day, and hundreds of carts are leaving, full of them for Gumri. It is impossible to say what their loss has been, but it must be enormous—facts are startling things, and we have buried so many thousands that it is no longer a matter of conjecture, but of certainty, that a very large proportion of the enemy's army must be *hors-de-combat*. How he is to meet Omar Pasha with his large army, fresh and in spirits, I know not; time will show what the result will be; in the mean time I think you will say we have done well, with our wretched little army, to keep that splendid force at bay for four months, and then give them as sound a thrashing as ever an enemy got.

"Every single battery engaged on the 29th, was

a child of my own creation, excepting the three English batteries, Zohrab, Thompson, and Teesdale. Open works were standing there when I came, and I had no time to do more than make them into enclosed redoubts, and connect them with a breastwork; Churchill battery, though open in rear, held out long after the other three were lost, and was only held by the enemy for a few minutes. The General thinks the loss of these batteries and the regaining of them was a great feather in our caps. Had they been only ordinarily manned they never would have been taken. I have often spoken about it, but we really had no troops to spare. Now we have got them properly defended, by taking troops from other works."

LETTER IV.

"KARS, October 31st, 1855.

"Each post that goes I always hope may take you the pleasing intelligence of the raising of this interminable siege, but I am continually disappointed. Here we are still blocked up, and as far from getting out of the scrape as ever. What makes it still more disheartening, is that our two last posts from England have been taken by the Russians. About a week ago Mouravieff sent a *parlementaire* with one letter for me, from you, dated September

the 16th, one for Captain Thompson, dated the 24th of September, and one for one of our interpreters, from Erzeroum ; yesterday he sent another letter for Captain Thompson, dated the 29th of September, so we conclude two posts have fallen into his hands ; and as your last to me was dated the 7th of September, the last previous to the one I now mention, I conclude at least five are in the Russian camp ; newspapers we have not seen for ages, as our Tartars are obliged to travel light, and leave all heavy packages at Erzeroum.

“ I wrote to you on the 10th, 12th, and 14th of this month, which letters you may possibly have got. Other letters I have written since, but one of our Tartars tried six several nights and failed to get out. The last time he went he did not return, but whether he got away or has fallen into the enemy's hands we cannot tell. Under these circumstances you will not be surprised at my not entering upon any subject connected with this devoted garrison in detail, for the odds are about one thousand to one against your getting my letter.

“ We can get no news we can rely on regarding any assistance that may be coming to us ; but rumour, as usual, is busy, and one day we hear of Omar Pasha being at Kutais, about to march on Tiflis. Another report tells us, the next day, that he has not left Batoum ; then again we hear that he has

never been there, and is at Sukum Kāleh higher up the Black Sea.

“To-day we have news that an army has arrived at Erzeroum, and will march instantly to our succour. God grant it may be so, and that we may be able to attack the enemy in the open. We are totally unable to extricate ourselves without assistance of some kind.

“Our great object now is to keep up the spirits of the troops, and hitherto we have succeeded tolerably well. I cannot at all make out why Mouravieff has not sent in all our private letters, and can only conclude that politics were touched upon in some of them. I suppose they have been the round of all the Russian camps, and I hope the readers have been edified.

“I have still, as I have always had, a presentiment that we shall finish this campaign gloriously. We have most assuredly learnt to place our entire trust and confidence in Him who never deserts those who do so, for we have received not the very smallest atom of assistance from man. We have been left as a ship about to founder, which it is considered impossible to save, and, therefore, useless making any attempt to do so.

“The world may judge hereafter, when all is known, how far we have been well treated.

“As Omar Pasha has not thought proper to come

direct to our assistance, his coming at all has been of no kind of use to us. Whether *he* is to blame for this or not, time will show.

“I shall write again whenever a post goes, but I almost despair of our getting one either out or in.

“We are expecting a fall of snow every day, but we have no longer the same piercing cold wind which we had a week ago.

“No more Cholera I am thankful to say; it was very severe while it lasted.

“I cannot help thinking there may soon be peace, and if so, I imagine my services will not be required after March or April.”

LETTERS OF MAJOR TEESDALE.

LETTER I.

"KARS.

"The blockade still continues, and the life we lead is becoming excessively monotonous, as patrols and rounds and night watches succeed each other with a most disagreeable regularity. The only things that enliven us at all are the skirmishes we have with the enemy, and which are generally caused by our trying to get in some of the forage which still remains standing. Yesterday we had a more important and interesting affair than usual, in which we got rather the best of it, so I will give you an account of it for want of a more interesting topic. I must first tell you that two days ago we had to send out some guns to drive back a party of Cossacks who had come to annoy our foragers, and that our little demonstration kept them so quiet for the moment that I had time to go out and reconnoitre, in detail, the whole of the ground between our position on the hills, and Chalgaur, a village about three miles to the north of our lines; there was still a good deal of nearly ripe corn standing there, and so Kmety had determined on getting it if possible.

"Well, after having made my report and talked the matter well over with Kmety, we sallied forth

yesterday morning at about eight o'clock. We have, as you know, no cavalry that we can depend upon, and to supply this deficiency I had made a little plan of my own, which was put into execution for the first time. We took fifteen of the best shots from the Hassa Sheshanidjes (riflemen of the guard), and mounted them! Each chasseur being attended by a cavalry man, who remained on his right, to hold the horse when the chasseur dismounted, and so forth. These I call my 'Chasseurs d'Asie,' in contradistinction to the 'Chasseurs d'Afrique,' and from the way they behaved yesterday they will probably be of good service to us in our diurnal squabbles with the enemy's cavalry. As this was to be rather more serious than usual, Kmety came himself to command the whole, a duty he generally leaves to me, and I went out at the head of my little band of mounted rifles, and having got well away to the front, chose the best position I could find for them, threw them out in skirmishing order, and then went to look out for Baklanoff's people.

"We had not long to wait, for as soon as we were well out on the ground the turn-out was sounded in the Inali camp, and shortly after down they marched upon us. As usual the first thing they did was to send out a scouring party, who came rushing down at full gallop, in hopes of

picking up a stray forager or cow, or something in the way of loot. My little chasseurs were all dismounted and sat glaring over their rifles, and were as impatient as possible to begin, although the cavalry fellows in attendance had to be kept up to the mark. Well, when they got pretty close they seemed rather surprised to see our people hold their own and not fire a volley and gallop off; but they soon got in range, and then I permitted the firing to begin. It was quite a treat to see their astonishment as soon as the conical balls began to whistle round them, and a clump collected probably to talk the matter over; but a shriek was heard in the midst of them and a saddle was emptied; this caused a little more crowding, and two or three more balls told, and so away they went to the rear as quickly as possible, taking off what could not go alone. Their next idea was to frighten us away with a couple of field guns they brought up; but after a few rounds they gave this up as a bad job, and tried to charge with the leading squadron of Cossacks. As before, they came on all very well till I let the rifles begin to talk to them, and then they quietly split and half got under cover on one side of the valley, and half on the other, and it was delightful to see how close they were kept, as not a head could show without a ball making it disappear. This was all very good fun, but the

main body had got rather too close to be pleasant to our little band, and were coming on pretty quick; so I was just going to give the word to retire, when bang went a gun, and the ball, after shaving our right flank, goes straight for them. Then a brisk fire began, which effectually stopped the Russians' advance, and so, finding they could do nothing for that day at least, they went home again in a most sulky way, having had several men knocked over, and having failed for once in driving us off the ground.

"Dear old Kmety came up to me just in time, and was as pleased as Punch with my new corps, which I mean to organise regularly, and of which I constitute myself captain, as one more among my multifarious duties will not make much difference. We were chuckling quietly over a pipe upon our success, when an order came from the general to come home immediately, as the Russians had turned out in force. Sure enough they had, and for some reason or other have marched two heavy columns right up opposite our Tachmasb lines, and there they have stuck ever since, which gave me the pleasure of sleeping out on the rocks in a soaking rain; and if they don't look sharp and be off I shall have to go again to night, and that is an amusement far more interesting than pleasant. I don't suppose they mean to attack, but one

must always be ready for them, and so there we are, and that is our *status in quo* for the present.

“We are all in capital health, and our spirits do us credit, and so, with that satisfactory intelligence for you, I shall say adieu.”

LETTER II.

“KARS.

“We have now begun real work in earnest. The Russians are encamped at Zaim, and we daily, or indeed hourly, expect their nearer approach. The General has posted me on the hills above the town with the brave old Kmety, my dear friend and companion during the winter; and at present I am living in a little bell tent by the side of his. I have just returned from my first reconnaissance, and have had a peep at the Russian camp.

“Rennison and I sallied forth this morning early in the direction of Inali, to try and ascertain what had become of a large body of Cossacks detached by the enemy yesterday in the direction of Olti. We got away in the grey of the morning with my four chaousches for escort, and questioned closely every one we met; till at last one fellow began to prevaricate extremely, and show an evident distaste to a long conversation with us, so he was immediately ordered to act as guide for the occasion,

just to encourage him ; and after a good deal of remonstrance he saw it was no use, and grumb-lingly obeyed. One of my orderlies, a very clever, sharp Arnaout, took the opportunity of informing me quietly, that he was a spy ; so, having given orders to shoot the scoundrel if he should try to escape, we marched on to a little village on the river. Here we got out the Chief, and confronted our guide with him, who was at once convicted, as a small boy bore witness to having seen him and a comrade coming in from the Russian Camp early in the morning, and further stated that they had changed Georgian sheep-skin caps for the ordinary turban : and in fact he marched off to a neighbouring ditch, and, sure enough, produced the caps in question. This finished the case for the prosecution, and the defence was not waited for ; so we disarmed our friend, and gave him over to the chief of the village ; and one of my orderlies going in by the river at a gallop, caught the other before he could get into town.

“ This little incident being disposed of, we got a fresh guide, and continued our march till we got to another village, where, as we all felt excessively hungry, I determined to bait ; so down we sat, and were just in the middle of some very delectable yaghoort, when Ibrahim Chaousch, who was in front, as an *éclaireur*, galloped in and reported a

party of Giaours to be coming to us. I examined them carefully with my glass, and made out about twenty irregulars coming from the direction of the Russian camp. Now we only numbered five sabres, so the odds were against us, particularly as I did not yet know my attendants enough to rely thoroughly on them. Therefore, as my object was pretty well accomplished, we began a retrograde movement towards home, the other party keeping on in a direction parallel to us and apparently edging closer and closer, so that as the ground was very broken, it became rather intricate manœuvring to keep our retreat clear. Things were just beginning to look rather serious, when Ibrahim went off with one of those sudden 'elans' that the Turkish horsemen delight in, and rode straight at the menacing detachment, which turned out to be a party of Bashi-Bazooks who had been out on the same errand as ourselves, and were rendered about as uneasy by our manœuvres as we were by theirs. We had a good laugh together when we had found out our mistakes, and then fraternised and marched home. The Chief of the party was a certain old Deli Hassan, one of our best partisans, and an old acquaintance of mine since the winter.

"We picked up our spy on the way back, who was intensely vituperated by all the party, and he is now in the hands of such justice as we can boast of.

Kmety gave me rather a wiggling for being out so long, as he began to be very uneasy about me; but after the report was made he gave me much κῦδος. Such has been this morning's work.

“These are hard times enough, and the future is indefinite; but we have the highest hopes in both soldiers and position, as our Mehendis Bashi, Lake, has strengthened the place marvellously, and the spirits of our men are wonderfully good. The cavalry we went to look after broke up their camp last night, and have marched to or towards Olti, which is unprotected. The Russian camp looked very big, and they must have a lot of men and no end of beasts. The most trying thing to us now is the weather, for it is very hot by day and a blazing sun; and at night so cold, that a fur coat is by no means too much protection; and these extremes, with an immense quantity of work and rather seedy food, try one's constitution. We have adopted the fez, which leaves all the face exposed, and the consequence is that we are all casting our skins, like so many serpents; and if we are not very loving, we are at all events enormously tender.

“This epistle must, I think, do for to-day; but you shall hear again as soon as anything interesting occurs; and now for a little ‘otium cum chibouque.’”

LETTER III.

“ Russian Camp, near KARS, *November 29, 1855.*

“ The game has been played out, and we are prisoners. You have, doubtless, heard this news vaguely already, as reports travel quickly through these countries, and the telegraph will soon have taken on the evil tidings. Such a result to our labours will not surprise those at home, who have ever taken the trouble to follow our career ; but, if you can believe such a thing, it is only within the last few days that the dreadful certainty of this happening has broken upon us. Even so late as a week before our surrender, we were buoyed up by hopes from more than one quarter ; and, like drowning men, we clung to every straw, and forced ourselves to believe even the impossible ; until at last, a little note in cypher from a reliable source, showed us that our fate was sealed, that all we had heard of troops marching to our relief, of provisions being ready to be thrown in, and many other stories, were false ; and it is now evident, that they were only concocted by those to whom every day of our misery was a day's more security and idleness. So we were left to perish ; the poor men getting weaker and more wretched day by day, until at last the state of the troops was so fearful, that they would not have had the strength to march for an hour, and any attempt

to march out would positively have been utterly useless, and would, probably, have resulted in a massacre of those brave men, who have watched and fought their strength away; and who, betrayed and abandoned, are now lying about in heaps, dying and disgraced,—prisoners to those whom they conquered—the property, so to say, of the power they have so long defied. Still, even in our degradation, I cannot help feeling that the disgrace lies with those whose duty it was to help us; and not with us, who, I believe in my heart, have done what men *could* do. But it matters little as to causes, now we have only the result to occupy us; so do not be surprised at any bitterness on my part: it may have been from the policy of governments, or from the passions of one bad man, or from bad generalship without the town; it little matters now: Kars has fallen. The Russians have gained half a province, and would have had the greater part of Armenia without a struggle, had not our resistance been sufficiently prolonged to let the winter be far enough advanced to prevent any more operations.

“Have the allies ever thought, I wonder, how much it would have cost them to redeem all this ground, or what they will have to pay, even for what we *have* lost? The whole business passes my comprehension, and I can scarcely yet believe that all our trials have ended thus; that six months of endless

toil, misery, privation, and, at last, moral agony, should have such a termination. I cannot look at the old place we so dearly cherished. The Russian flag, once driven down those hills in disgrace and flight, must be now waving over the castle, and it is too hard to bear. There may be a chuckle over our fate in the Bosphorus; but a reckoning will come some day, if not before man, before God, who best knows the secrets of evil hearts, and a heavy one it will be.

“But enough of these regrets. It is *past*. Our enemies, who seem far more fully alive to what we have gone through, than our *soi-disant* friends, behave perfectly. I expected it from them, for they fought well. Mouravieff, who is a perfect old gentleman, set the example. I can forgive *him* with my whole heart, and admire him, too, for his perseverance. We are to start almost immediately; and shall, I believe, go direct to Tiflis, to wait for orders as to our ultimate destination. We shall probably have a chance of writing on our road; so here I shall cease. This is the first letter I have written for ages in bad spirits, and I hope it may be the last. *En attendant*, believe me, &c. &c.”

CHAPTER II.

Our departure—Our feelings on leaving—March to the Russian camp—Farewell to Kars—The Russian camp—General Mouravieff's quarters—Russian hospitality—First night of captivity—Colonel Kauffmann—En route to Gumri—"Jam satis terris nivis"—Colonel Esachoff—Beds, breakfasts and dinners—Alexandropol—The Princess Dondukoff—Off to Tiflis—Georgian and Armenian villages.

ON the 28th November, 1855, the Turks laid down their arms. It was with the greatest difficulty that they could be persuaded to do so. The brave fellows wished to die at their posts, although worn out by famine, privations, and hardships. Indeed, it required no little tact to prevent a serious disturbance, which might have thwarted the favourable intentions of our generous enemy; for the Pashas and superior-officers of the Turks were far from being contented with the conditions granted by the Russian Commander-in-chief.

They had, it appeared, formed a somewhat sanguine expectation that they should be permitted to go to their respective homes, like the Rediff (militia), and quoted precedents, whether historical or imaginary, it is hard to decide. Such hopes, however, more natural than reasonable, were doomed to be speedily

disappointed, for the whole of the troops, about eighteen thousand strong, after laying down their arms, were paraded in front of the west line of works, and, when stragglers had been collected, and something like order attained, were marched off from the scene of their struggles and sufferings. Never shall I forget the deep despondency under which the Mushir and Kereem Pasha appeared to be labouring. The men looked dejected and miserable in the extreme, and, altogether, a sadder sight can hardly be conceived, and it has certainly never been my lot to witness. I am anxious to plead no exemption from such feelings on the part of my comrades and myself. When we reflected for how long a period, under circumstances the most adverse, we had held the place against numbers infinitely superior to our own, and with how small a succour we might have continued to do so, it was, indeed, sad and vexatious to surrender it, even upon the most honourable terms. The only drop of consolation in our cup of bitterness was the reflection that we had done our duty. I looked back with a heavy heart at the works upon which I had laboured so long, and which had in no way disappointed my expectations.

It was, moreover, consoling to think that the prolonged resistance we had succeeded in making, had not been without good results. Had we abandoned Kars, and fallen back upon Erzeroum, as,

shortly after the victory of the 29th September, we could so easily have done, we should have yielded to the enemy so strong a spot, at a time of the year when there was still some opportunity for further operations, that Asia Minor must have been almost entirely in his power. As it was, we held the place until the season was too advanced to permit of his doing more than keeping the position he had won. That we could have held out no longer, may be clearly enough understood, when it is remembered that on the 27th, the day previous to the capitulation, no less than two hundred and thirty men died of starvation, and that there remained but one more day's provision in store.

In such a state of physical prostration were the troops,* that it occupied us nearly *four* hours to reach the Russian camp. Delays were occasioned

* Mr. Brant, in his despatch to Lord Clarendon of November 28th, writes what he had just learned from General Kmety, and I see that it confirms my own recollection of the state of affairs. "Scarcely 1000 men of the whole garrison were in a state to use their weapons, and not many more could have sustained a march pursued by an enemy. Had a retreat been attempted very few would have survived it; those who escaped the arms of the enemy would have died of exhaustion. The women crowded round the General's house with their starving children crying for food, and throwing down their little ones at his gate, would not depart but with food. Himself whom it had been their delight to salute and recognise as he passed, they no longer noticed kindly, but hurried by with an ominous half-averted scowl; the same look was perceived in the soldiers; and how this must have lacerated a breast which always overflowed with tenderness towards suffering humanity."

by the passage of the narrow bridge over the Karstschai, which could only be effected in single file; but we were also compelled to halt every half-hour, to rest the men whose strength had, for the last two months, so diminished, that eighteen of them fell down dead on this short march.

At the head of the army rode the Mushir, General Williams on one side, and myself on the other. We did our utmost to keep up his spirits, though we as much needed consolation as he did. He groaned most piteously, and declared that he was an old man, and that it was very hard upon him that he should be taken prisoner. At intervals, however, his natural kindliness of heart shone forth from this cloud of sorrow, and somewhat lightened his load of misery. "What right have I to complain," he exclaimed, "when English officers, who have fought so hard, and suffered so much for me, are carried away into captivity far from their homes?"

When we had reached a spot, where lay the crumbling ruins of an old Genoese church, near the Russian camp, the Turkish troops were drawn up, and received by a detachment of the enemy, chiefly consisting of cavalry. The Mushir and ourselves cantered on to General Mouravieff's quarters, and were most courteously received by him and his

staff. The Russian Commander-in-chief then rode out, accompanied by the Mushir and a numerous retinue, to receive the army of Kars. Those of us whose presence was no longer required, retired into a small room, where, with some of the Russian officers, we chatted over the past campaign, and present condition of affairs. It was a strange position to be placed in by the chances of war, to find ourselves in pleasant social converse with the very men we had been seeking to destroy, and whose fervent desire it had so lately been to conquer or to starve us. If misfortune makes strange bed-fellows, a capitulation comes under that class of mischance which may initiate pleasant friendships with recent enemies. At least, so it was in our case.

The Russian kindness and hospitality were not proffered to us alone. When a form had been solemnly concluded between General Mouravieff and the Turks, in which they gave up their colours to him, they were marched into the camp, and regaled with bread and soup which had been prepared for them. Some of the poor famished creatures ate so voraciously, that even this simple fare was fatal to them, and they died of repletion in a few hours. Our temptation to indulge was greater than theirs; for, at 5 P.M., we were entertained by General Mouravieff at his own quarters, in the most sumptuous style. The banquet had its skeleton as of

old,—for, outside the quarters where we were feasting, waved the captured banners we had so long defended. Amidst the gaiety of conversation, and the, to us, unwonted inspiration of the wine-cup, some sad thoughts of our new condition would intrude ; some anxious yearnings after home, and those most dear to us ; some disquietudes as to the conduct of courts and cabinets on the question of peace or war.

If there was anything calculated to chase away such gloomy associations, it was the hearty and pleasant manner of our host, and the interest he displayed in all that had occurred at Kars. He seemed much annoyed when I told him that I had destroyed the plan I had made of the fortifications, under the impression that I should not be permitted to keep it. “ One of my engineer officers is going to make one, and you shall have a copy of it,” he said. Nothing could exceed his courtesy and kindness to us all : Teesdale and myself he thanked warmly for our efforts to save the wounded Russians on the field of battle from the ferocity of the Turks. Of our defence of Kars he spoke almost rapturously ; and his eyes were suffused with tears when he remarked that, although the bodies of our men were emaciated from the sufferings they had undergone, their eyes were bright, and sparkling with courage and animation. The officers, after dinner, crowded round us, eager to learn whatever they could of the

long defence, and insisted on our going to their tents with them to drink champagne.

That night I was billeted on Colonel Kauffmann, the Commandant of Sappers and Miners. He told me that he commanded the regiment that was retreating, on the 29th September, towards Tchakmak, and which we fired on from Fort Lake and Yuksek Tabia with such fatal precision that, according to his own statement, two hundred and fifty of his men were killed in a few minutes. It was a very gallant affair on the part of the Russians, for the regiment made good its retreat, though assailed by a murderous cross-fire.

My feelings on retiring to bed I shall not easily forget. I was pervaded by a calm sense of security,—an absence of the trying responsibility which had, for months, become a habit of mind. The thought that there were no longer any risks or terrors to be endured—and that NIGHT, even in the camp of an enemy, might bring repose—that I should no longer be aroused from my short sleep by the uncertain sounds of an attack, the roar of cannon, or the rattle of musketry,—this pleasant vacuity from fear and care lulled all my senses like a gentle opiate—and I soon fell asleep. These sensations, however, soon proved to be very deceptive. What had become almost a normal state of mind and body was not to be shaken off in a day. I cannot say that I

experienced the *ægri somnia*,* for I never was in better health in my life ; but every slight sound awoke me, and what sleep I had was disturbed.

Next day (29th November), I amused myself by walking over the camp, chatting with many of the Russian officers, almost all of whom spoke French and German, and some of them English. They were kind and affable in the extreme. From the appearance of the camp, General Mouravieff must have come to a fixed determination to stay there, if possible, during the whole winter.

A regular town had been built in the encampment, mud barracks for the men, and comfortable houses for the officers, half under ground. On the evening of this day, I was entertained by my host Colonel Kauffmann, and was much gratified by some good vocal music during dinner. A number of his soldiers had been placed in an adjoining tent, where they sang, taking parts, with considerable taste and spirit.

Next day (November 30th), we commenced our journey for Russia, somewhat uncertain about our future destination, but first bound for Gumri (Alexandropol) *en route* to Tiflis.

* A friend has called my attention to a despatch of Mr. Brant's in which the Consul asserts that Lieut.-Colonel Lake was suffering from gout. This is really the first I know of it. I am not a sufficiently wealthy man to feel justified in arrogating to myself so highly respectable a disease as the one in question.

At 11 A.M. we took leave of General Mouravieff and the Mushir. The latter was much affected at parting from us, kissed our hands, and thanked us fervently for our services. The General travelled in a calèche drawn by three horses, and the rest of us rode, our party consisting of Captain Thompson, Major Teesdale, Mr. Churchill the General's secretary, who, when non-combatants were permitted to depart, volunteered to accompany us, and Captain Bashmakoff, an officer of the Chevalier Guard, A.D.C. to General Mouravieff. I had only my mare and the Cossack pony, upon which my faithful servant Schäller was mounted. We had, in every sense of the word, a *slow* ride; for the snow impeded our progress, and hid everything from our view save its own glare of white monotony. '*Nil nisi pontus et aer,*' as we said at Harrow, suggested a parody of *nil nisi nix et ventus*, for over the vast surface of snow a biting wind, cruelly cold, rushed against us, as if we were still the enemies of the inhospitable clime, and the very elements had taken up arms in its defence.

We were better treated, however, by the Russians than by the climate, for, arrived at Yeni-Keui after a tedious ride, we had a very pleasant time of it. Invited to breakfast (December 31st), with Colonel Esackoff, who commanded a Cossack battery of artillery, we were most hospitably treated. Colonel

Esackoff was, it seemed, the officer who was so frequently guilty of the somewhat disagreeable proceeding of bringing his guns up at night and startling us from our sleep by his feigned attacks. We all laughed very heartily as we talked it over. We also met his Subaltern, Count Medem, who showed us over the camp and was most polite and attentive. Here, as well as in the main camp, everything was the pattern of order and comfort, and the appearance of the troops such as to command the admiration of every military man, and to excite in my own mind fresh surprise that we had been able during so long a time to keep them at bay. All arrangements seemed to be perfect, and they had stores of every kind in abundance.

We said adieu at 3 P.M., and through a storm of sleet and snow jogged slowly on to Vesin Keui, another of the Russian outposts, which we reached at 6.30 P.M., chilled almost to death by the inclement weather. Here we were lodged in a hut built for the commanding officer, and, after an excellent dinner and an ample supply of wine, 'turned in' on our mattresses laid on the floor in one room. A long day in the frosty air, and a comfortable dinner at the end of it, especially where you are consuming the *vetus vinum* and *pinguis farina* of an enemy, are pleasantly provocative of sleep, and already my ear was growing more deaf to nocturnal sounds. I had

learned to content myself with dreaming that I was in my battery and my battery safe.

We left this place at seven next morning (1st of December), and rode to Hadgi Veli Keui, where we breakfasted with a Prince (princes abound), who commanded a Cossack regiment. His hospitality was prince-like, but we had not leisure to enjoy as much as he would have promptly afforded; for we rode on in the afternoon to Gumri (Alexandropol). Here we found that a most comfortable house had been prepared for us, and the supply of bedrooms an improvement on the foregoing night, there being two, in one of which slept the General and myself, while the remainder of the party occupied the other.

Once more must I remark that at the next day's dinner we were superbly treated,—that champagne sparkled in our glasses, and claret gurgled forth from the decanter with that gushing music so peculiar to the best of wines; and I must now, even at the risk of doing injustice to our hospitable entertainers, for ever dismiss the subject, lest I be mistaken for a *bon-vivant* traveller, or what would be yet more horrible still—a gourmand captive.

On the 2nd of December, we tarried in Alexandropol (Gumri), which agreeably disappointed such expectations as I had thought fit to indulge in, being a larger and pleasanter place than I had supposed. The shops were good and kept mostly by

Germans—that enterprising race—who, if satisfied with a supremacy in classical criticism, metaphysical disquisitions and pipe-smoking at home, are enterprising men of business in all other countries, and whose industry, method, and steadiness permeate the Russian empire to its centre. I visited the fort, which seemed strong; but with more than even English honesty, not to abuse the confidence reposed in me, examined it with only half an eye. My professional brethren, who know what the temptation of an officer of engineers in an enemy's fortification is, will appreciate the immensity of the struggle between curiosity and honour. When, however, I looked at the heavy siege guns, I could not refrain from a grateful reflection that they had not been brought to bear upon our works at Kars, where our want of ammunition would have rendered us utterly helpless.

We spent a delightful evening at the house of the Princess Dondukoff, having made the acquaintance of her husband in the Russian camp. He commanded a regiment of dragoons, was stationed at Boskalli in front of Tachmasb, and was a very first-rate officer. There was something strangely pleasant, after the horrors of war, and our long banishment from female society, to be in the company of a clever and kind-hearted woman.

On Tuesday (4th of December), by 11 A.M., we

were *en route* to Tiflis. It was arranged that, as my valet, dragoman and *factotum*, Schaller, was profound in the management of horses, they as well as the heavy baggage should be consigned to his watchful care. General Williams and I reclined in a large and luxurious britska drawn by six horses, four in the shafts abreast, and two leaders guided by a postilion, the General's servant being mounted on the box. Behind us followed Thompson, Teesdale, Churchill, and Captain Bashmakoff, in a somewhat smaller vehicle, and the rear was brought up by two light post-carts filled with our wearing apparel for the journey, canteens and provisions. I find by my diary that some of these provisions were assailed with vigour at 3 P.M., and that, after this comfortable refectio, a late dinner was discussed with some ability at a station where we reclined in the same room on mattresses.

Up betimes next morning (December 5th), and by 7 A.M., off again, passing through a very fine line of country. The day was bright and clear; wood and mountain interspersed with frequent streams, swollen with melted snow and recent rain, sparkling in the sunshine, formed a panorama of varied and magnificent scenery; and my reader will readily forgive my raptures if he will only think that in one who had just undergone a six months' siege, and rested his eyes on nothing but a starving

garrison, it kindled some novel and very pleasant sensations to gaze on the beauties of nature from a comfortable carriage, with an agreeable companion at his side. We passed through several Georgian and Armenian villages. The farms are built with great regularity in one large long line, every house being the counter-part of the adjoining one, and each separated by a small farm-yard. The people looked healthy and happy. The Armenian hamlets, *au contraire*, consist of mud huts, half under ground. The inhabitants seemed to be as squalid and wretched as their tenements.

The next day we were not quite so favoured in the matter of weather, which was dull and drizzling; but the scenery, through which we passed, was as picturesque as that of the previous one. We followed, for many miles, the course of a rapid stream, the road occasionally rising above it, and then descending into the valley again. The outposts at which we stopped were very small, and not very clean, and we all slept in one room, sometimes packed rather tightly. In this respect, perhaps alone, was it better that the thermometer should have been below zero, rather than that our lot should have fallen on the dog-days; for I cannot imagine anything more beautiful, and occasionally sublime, than the probable aspect of the country through which we were passing, had the landscape

been variegated and enriched with all the umbrageous grandeur of summer-tide.

If the weather threatened to starve us with cold, there was no fear of our suffering any such fate at the hands of our guide, philosopher, and friend, Captain Bashmakoff, who was a jailer of the most delightful clemency, and who lavished the money of his Government on our comfort with laudable liberality. Many thanks to you, pleasant Captain Bashmakoff! Come and visit us here, and you will receive as hearty a welcome as you merit.

CHAPTER III.

Tiflis—Our hotel—Prince Bebutoff—The theatre—Tiflisian inhospitality—Omer Pasha expected once more—Arrival of General Mouravieff—The military funeral—Christmas day—The word “prisoner”—Intended route changed—Bad news from St. Petersburg—General Williams’s illness—Our departure—Farewell to Tiflis.

RUMOURS had reached Tiflis that we were approaching. Make way for the captives of Kars. As the place was full of troops, and the headquarters of General Mouravieff, it was no matter for surprise that the 60,000 inhabitants should be on the look out for us ; and accordingly, when we drove into the town at 2h. 30m. P.M., Saturday, the 8th of December, every window was filled, and every street crowded. Be it, however, fairly admitted, that while I never before witnessed curiosity so general and eager, there was nothing disrespectful or offensive in the conduct of the multitude which had assembled to have a good look at the English prisoners. We were lodged in a magnificent house situate in the principal street. It contained a large number of spacious rooms, which were handsomely furnished. This hotel was kept by an Italian, one Karl Morigi, and had been

taken by the Russian Government for our accommodation, the upper part of the house being assigned to us, and the lower part left for the Turkish Pashas who were expected. A marked improvement was observable in our quarters; for we could each of us now enjoy a bedroom to himself, and we had two large sitting rooms for general use. The Russian Government paid for the Hotel 1000 roubles (£160) per month. A portion of the crowd that had followed us through the streets, remained fixed at the door, and did not disperse until nearly dark.

On the following day we paid a visit of ceremony to the Governor of Tiflis, Prince Bebutoff. He is a fine soldier-like looking man, though nearly seventy, and received us not only with courtesy, but with kindness; saying what pleasure it gave him to meet officers who had conducted so gallant a defence as that of Kars. He was in full uniform, covered with orders, and attended by a numerous staff. Like other Russians of high military or civil rank he spoke French and German fluently. We next paid our respects to the various Heads of Departments, and also presented ourselves to General Prince Gargarine, who had been wounded in the battle of the 29th of September.

The four following days were spent in receiving the various visitors who called on us. Among them was a fellow-countryman of the name of Marr, who

had resided in Russia some twenty years as a farmer. We received every attention at his hands.

The town of Tiflis is half European and half Asiatic, its 60,000 inhabitants being a mixture of Georgians and Armenians. It is very prettily situated, flanked by high mountains, and surrounded at a distance by a still loftier range bisected by the Kur, a large river which flows through it. We saw it, however, under great disadvantages, for though the winter is usually mild,* and the climate said to be delicious, during our stay the weather was very variable and trying—one day beautifully fine, the next bitterly cold; and the streets were—since they are not paved—either sheets of ice or rivulets of mud. This made riding and also walking rather impracticable; and I therefore spent my mornings very much at home with the exception of a few walks with the General, when my ankle would enable me to do so.† In the evenings—the Tiflisians not being by any means addicted to hospitality—we amused ourselves by going to the theatre, where our party very

* So severe was it during our stay, that the Caucasus became for some time impassable, and no post came in for nine days from St. Petersburg.

† One is ashamed of going into such personal matters, but I may make this allusion clear by saying that I had a severe fall from my horse on the road from Erzeroum to Kars, and again sprained my foot, though I cannot remember how or when, in the hard fighting of the 29th of September.

comfortably filled a box, which cost only six roubles, or one pound. The house was one of the prettiest I ever saw ; elegant in shape, and elaborately fitted. Count Woronzoff, who for a long time resided at Tiflis, had expended large sums of money on it. The dresses were quite magnificent, having been procured by him from Paris. The acting was above mediocrity, and the music good—the young ladies of the ballet being, of course, beautiful. The Mushir, after his arrival, accompanied us one evening, and his habitual gloom for a time vanished while witnessing Madame Petrova's admirable impersonation of character, in a language which none of us understood, or while gazing admiringly on the many-twinkling feet of Mesdemoiselles Sankoffsky, Gregoriova, and Ivanovna.

The private houses are well-built and comfortable-looking. I avoid speaking with two great confidence on the subject, as our opportunities for taking an external view were far more ample than those for an internal examination.* The bazaars were very spacious and picturesque. Hotel prices were enormous. One item I remember, and the rest were in proportion. They charged us one shilling and eightpence for every cup of tea, which, even

* The population of this town forms in this particular a strange contrast to the Russians themselves, whose hospitality is boundless.

with the addition of a slice of lemon, must be admitted to be more than ample remuneration for the luxury in question. The keep of horses, also, was expensive, one rouble, or three shillings and fourpence per day each.

One morning the town was somewhat surprised at the sudden departure of Prince Bebutoff for the neighbourhood of Cutais. A rumour consequently arose that he had gone to watch the movements of Omar Pasha—the always expected and never-arriving Omar Pasha of Kars.

The next event which disturbed the placidity of Tiflis was the arrival of General Mouravieff. A great demonstration was made to receive the successful warrior of Asia Minor, and the town was very gaily illuminated. Two days after he arrived, we all dined with his Excellency, and found him as agreeable and attentive as ever. I ought before this to have said, that in addition to his endowments as a great general, he is an accomplished musician and linguist. Upon the day that he first entertained us in his camp, he spoke fluently, French, English, German, Turkish, or Russian, conversing with his various guests and acquaintances in their own languages with perfect ease. After the dinner a ball was given in the town, to which all the juniors of our party went, the General and myself, with a prudence beyond our years, restraining our Terpsi-

chorean tendencies, and quietly spending our evening at home.

In my reminiscences of Tiflis I have to pass, with a somewhat sudden transition, to a sad event which occurred during my sojourn there. Winding its slow and solemn way before our windows one morning, I saw the procession of a military funeral. Upon enquiry, I learned that it was that of a young officer of dragoons. A brother officer and himself had had some difference about a young lady, in whose affections the former thought that he had been supplanted by his friend. This jealousy did not lead to any open breach, but there lay a smouldering hate, under the show of courtesy and familiarity with which they associated. The discarded lover and his successful rival were engaged in a game of cards, when the former accused the latter of unfair play. Words immediately ensued; the jealous rival, not satisfied with bringing such an accusation, also demanded satisfaction of a hostile kind. The other refused to meet him; when, maddened with the revenge kindled by his rejection and wounded pride, he followed his former friend and companion into a room alone, and drawing out a pistol, shot him dead. Such tragedies, it is to be hoped, are very infrequent occurrences in the Russian army, even in the Transcaucasian provinces. He was borne along to

the grave, his friends and comrades following him to his last home, and—when one had heard the painful circumstances of the case—a very melancholy spectacle it seemed.

December 25th. — We all dined together, and were as merry as, under the circumstances, we could be. I by no means desire to parade before the public my domesticity or feelings; but by the entries in my journal I find that the conventional hilarity of Christmas was diminished, if not destroyed, by thoughts of home. It is a season which of one's own free choice no one would sincerely elect to spend as a captive of war in a strange land. Upon the mind of an Englishman all anniversaries fall with emphasis. And when to the hallowed associations that sanctify the day are added tender thoughts of home and household, the family round the happy fireside, the interchange of kind words, and guileless mirth, it was, despite the society of brave and pleasant companions, a day that hung heavily on one's hands. Moreover, after the exertions and excitement which had become as it were part of my very life and character during the defence of Kars, the present lack of employment and responsibility produced a reaction of the most painful kind. If Tiflis was our Capua, it was inactivity rather than pleasure that enervated. There is something too in the word "prisoner" which

falls most gratingly on the ear of a "free-born Briton." It at least produced disagreeable uncertainties about the future, queer sensations about the wrists and ankles, and caused uncomfortable visions of Siberia to float before the mind's eye. It would be most ungracious however not to admit that everything was done to prevent our reflecting upon our condition. Our movements were never, as far as we could see, in any way watched; and there was nothing in our treatment of which the most grumbling Englishman could complain. The liberality of the Russian government was boundless. When it was at first arranged that we were to proceed to Veronesh, not very far from Moscow, to await further orders from the Emperor, we were all supplied, among other things, with fur-cloaks, boots and caps of the most comfortable and costly kind. My coat cost 148 roubles, 24*l.*; the General's, 170 roubles; and the others 80 roubles each; our servants were also supplied with warm and useful articles.

On the 1st of January, 1856, General Williams suffering from an attack of cold which ultimately brought on fever, I paid a visit of ceremony to General Mouravieff, accompanied by Teesdale and Thompson. The Commander-in-Chief took me into his study, and read me a letter which he had just received from St. Petersburg, with instructions that

General Williams, his aide-de-camp, and secretary, should be sent to Riazan, a town about 180 miles from Moscow; and that Thompson and I were to proceed to Penza, which is nearly 700 miles to the east of Moscow. This was sad intelligence.* We had lived so long together on terms of such unbroken amity and friendship. We had shared so many dangers together, and fought so long side by side, that it seemed now somewhat hard to be separated in this arbitrary manner, for some reason which we were entirely at a loss to comprehend. There was, however, no help for it; and as the General's illness made it impossible for him to think of moving, Thompson and I began to prepare for our departure. We dined with General Mouravieff and his staff on the day of this interview. I don't know whether his Excellency intended to render more palatable the disagreeable St. Petersburg despatch by his personal kindness and sumptuous hospitality, but he was more than usually courteous and attentive.

General Williams's health now became a subject of serious solicitude. Cold had brought on

* At the risk of being accused of trying to show that I did not leave all my Latin behind me at school, I must cite an apt sentence from Cicero's *De Amicitia*. It is literally applicable to our Kars-life and subsequent travels. "*Una domus erat, idem victus, isque communis : neque solum militia, sed etiam peregrinationes rusticationesque communes.*" Cap. xxvii.

fever, and the fever had so increased that there was ground for alarm. As soon as the intense mental excitement of Kars was over, the wear and tear which his health had undergone, having no longer any sustaining stimulant, began to tell on him. He was attended by two medical men; and I am sure that he will neither accuse me of boasting or flattery, if I say, that it was the highest pride and sincerest pleasure of his comrades to minister to any want, and pay any attention that lay within their power. It pleased Heaven to spare him, to receive such a recognition in this country as his courage and genius deserve; and if this nation does not forget the Military Art, and is ever called on to draw the sword in self-defence, or to protect the weak, a great career will be opened to one, who, in peace, will doubtless now turn his great and practical talents to much account, in introducing safe and salutary reforms into our military system.

His continued illness would have induced us, had we been free agents, to have delayed our departure; but on the morning of the 6th of January (the Russian Christmas-day), General Mouravieff sent for me, and said, that he regretted he was obliged to order Thompson and myself to at once leave for Penza, and inquired in how short a time we could prepare for our departure. I asked for three days, which were of course granted, and the

General at once introduced to me Ensign Polivanoff, of the Erivanski regiment, who had fought at Kars. He was directed to accompany us, and was supplied with necessary funds, passports, and with all due authority for facilitating our progress on the somewhat formidable journey in store for us. A britska was purchased for our use. I sold my horses, saddles, &c., at far better prices than I had expected, parting not without real regret with my pet mare and the Cossack pony, both of whom had carried me so well and safely in many a busy day at Kars.

We now said farewell to the General with very heavy hearts, full of anxiety about his recovery; but, save our deep regret at being parted from our chief and comrades, free I think on other grounds from that melancholy which, according to Byron, makes the traveller look at any receding steeple with a sigh.

CHAPTER IV.

Schaller and Kadri — Post comes in — Duchet to Annanoor — Snow — The convent — The Russian doctor — Passanamore — Prince Karsbek — His hospitality — Karshowar — General intoxication — Sleighing — The Caucasus — The landscape — Eternal snow — Koorbi — Kasbek to Dariel — Private theatricals — The Princess Tamara.

LEAVING behind us the inhospitable inhabitants, the gutters of mud, by courtesy called streets, the pretty theatre, and the costly hotel, and with no desire to revisit Tiflis, either as prisoners or free-men, in a winter alternating between severe frost and rapid thaw, we yoked our five horses to the britska, three to the humbler cart which followed it, and at 4 P.M. on the 9th January, 1856, started on our Transeaucasian tour,—Thompson, Polivanoff, and myself,—each man's mattress

'A bed by night, a *carriage seat* by day,'

while Schaller and Kadri mounted the box, not wrapped in the Horatian tegument of their own virtue alone, but also in divers coats, and cloaks, and sheepskins, calculated to kindle and conserve animal heat. Alas, for fame! The curious crowd

that mobbed us on our arrival, permitted us to depart without any popular demonstration whatever.

Our party was now narrowed to three, *i.e.* the chief *dramatis personæ*, and our story also to successive experiences of uncomfortable nights at dreary stations, and bitterly cold days on the route. The roads were infamous; and our carriage, though amply commodious, was too heavy, as we soon discovered, for such a journey, and quite innocent of springs.

Just as we were leaving the town, to our great joy tidings reached us that a post had come in, and that letters had arrived for us from England *viâ* Erzeroum. It was tantalising to be kept without them; but we exercised great self-denial, and, to avoid delay, started; a distinct pledge having been given us, that a mounted Cossack should follow to the next station with the long-expected news from home. They contained, I remember, intelligence that a detailed account of the attack of the 29th September had been received in England.

Leaving the uncomfortable little station where we had spent our first night, we were again jolting over the execrable roads by 10 A.M. on the 10th, and succeeded in reaching Duchet by 3 P.M. Here there was nothing but an old Turkish fort to feast the eye on; and, as we had seen quite enough of Turkish forts ere this, we stayed only to

luncheon and departed; and over slippery roads, and up long hills, which we were forced to climb on foot, journeyed tediously to Annanoor. Here again was a little dirty station-house full of Russian officers. They could spare us but one small room, in which, by the help of fatigue and our mattresses, we managed to get through the night. We had passed through a country which, in the summer, must be quite lovely, but we could form only a very inadequate notion, except of its general outline, for it was everywhere coated with snow. It was peculiarly aggravating (I fear I am a grumbling traveller) that the snow just now was sufficiently deep to obscure the landscape, but not deep enough to admit of our using sleighs. So we proceeded slowly; the wheels of our lumbering britska clogged, and the absence of springs giving a fine jolting sensation, which would have tried our teeth, had they been at all uncertain in their tenure of our jaws, and which made my comrade's cigar vibrate between his lips in a highly comic manner.

Next morning we should have honoured Annanoor no longer with our presence, but for the unfortunate accident of not being able to procure horses.

To wile away the time, accompanied by Polivanoff, I walked some little way out of the village to see an old convent, two sketches of which he cleverly

executed.* It was built about the tenth or eleventh century by Prince Aristoff. The architecture is Georgian, the walls being of brick faced with stone. The monument of the founder still exists ; but there is nothing remarkable in its appearance. The height of the centre dome is about 80 feet, and that of other portions about 50. The length of the interior is 48 feet, the breadth 36. It is partitioned throughout, painted in various colours, and has a representation of the Crucifixion.

Close at hand, but detached from the convent, is a chapel, which has been either recently built, or so renovated as to look entirely new. The exterior is superbly carved, the devices being of the most elaborate kind, chiefly consisting of gigantic crosses, serpents, and flowers. At a short distance stands a quaint and antique-looking belfry, octagonal in shape, built of stone, richly carved, with a domed roof supported by pillars. I am told that it had a good peal of bells ; which, as the inhabitants had neglected to greet our entry by ringing, I cannot, on my own authority, praise. All these buildings are situated on a hill, surrounded by a stone rampart, with square and round towers at intervals. They form altogether a striking picture ; and we

* I wish they could have appeared in this volume instead of my portrait. But Mr. Bentley ruled otherwise, and there is no contending against the eloquence of a persuasive publisher.

were fortunate in seeing it on a day so bright and beautiful.

Another *contre-temps* as we were on the point of starting! Our carriage packed, ourselves ready, and the horses being harnessed, up came a Russian doctor holding some high appointment, and what to us was more practically interesting, having with him an authority which gave him a prior claim to us, in seizing on all the available horse-flesh of Annanoor and other stations, and converting it, not as we had done at Kars to culinary, but to travelling purposes. We had nothing to do, but to grin and bear it, or, to express myself in less colloquial language, we met our fate with stoical fortitude and Christian resignation, consoling ourselves with the reflection that in Russia we must be for some time, and that a day or two later at Penza was not of momentous importance.

On Saturday, January 12th, passing through a lovely country, and crossing the river Aragua, we reached the small village of Passanamore. Owing to the state of the roads we had again walked several *versts*,* and there was ample opportunity, and some probability, of our walking a great many more; for the prevenient professor of the healing art had

* I will here remark, for the sake of the few who are not versed in Russian long measure, that a verst is 500 *sachènes*, or (as this is only *ignotum per ignotius*) 1125 yards,—about $23\frac{1}{2}$ versts to 15 miles.

monopolised every quadruped, and there were numbers of travellers on this account delayed at the station-house.

Necessity being, it is very well known, the mother of invention, we found some solace in the resource of seven yoke of oxen, five yoke for the britska, and two for the luggage.

We took off the wheels, and put on the sledges,—an operation which only occupied a quarter of an hour,—and left about 4.30 P.M., walking the greater part of the way in consequence of the state of the roads, and not arriving at Kirshett until between ten and eleven. This village is the property of Prince Karsbek.

I do not know whether this gifted noble is a Tiflisian or not, nor do I care to enquire. There is, however, some probability of his being one, for he carried inhospitality to a perfection which is not often attained even in the most barbarous regions. Although especially enjoined by the Russian government to find shelter for travellers, and peasants to assist them in crossing the mountains, and though formally acquainted by Polivanoff of our arrival, this small but arrogant local potentate treated us with a contempt which might have been sublime, if it had not been ridiculous. If the English prisoners had been trampers, they might perhaps have fared better at his hands; for he would

in that case have had the fear of his government before his eyes. His conduct formed a striking contrast to the boundless hospitality we everywhere else, Tiflis always excepted, enjoyed in Russia. The only attention which he did vouchsafe us, was the very delicate one of coming to his door on our departure next morning, and with his children and household staring at us, as if we had been strange specimens of a newly discovered monster or at least escaped lunatics. We can only metaphorically say that we shook the dust off our feet on leaving, for they were too much clogged with snow to admit of any such mark of our indignation. If he is the victim of too ardent a veneration for classical epithets, and wishes to perpetuate the Horatian *inhospitalis* in its connection with *Caucasus*, I and all other men of conservative tendencies will of course forgive him; but should this account of his impoliteness reach the eye of his Imperial Master, this unpolished feudal chief of a wild and ignorant neighbourhood may perhaps receive an admonition, the benefits of which may accrue to future travellers.

On Sunday, the 13th, our empty britska behind us drawn by seven yoke of oxen, and our luggage by two, we again trudged on foot through the thick snow and slowly ascended a high mountain which is about five versts from the nearest station, Karshowar.

It was a clear bright day, but piercingly cold, and owing to the recent fall of an avalanche, it was scarcely possible for the long team of oxen to drag our empty carriage up the precipitous ascent. Our original intention had been to proceed further without delay, but we were advised that it was better to commence early in the morning and so cross the Caucasus in a day.

Karshowar is a small but pretty village, on every side surrounded by lofty hills. The scene presented by the inhabitants, though not by any means grateful to one's moral sense, completely withdrew our attention from the natural features of the place and neighbourhood. The ghost of Father Mathew would have been grieved had it accompanied us, and the gifted George Cruikshank would have distributed his "bottle" and gnashed his teeth. It was the Russian New Year's day. Here was one temptation to be jovial. There were some Russian troops halting in the place. The military have always been convivial—ever since the days that Alexander hated thinking, and introduced a black bottle at the council-board. Here was another excuse. Moreover, as most former travellers, however Philo-Russian, admit, the Muscovite has a natural talent for the imbibition of strong liquors, which practice renders almost perfect. Then, without enumerating the five famous reasons for drinking,

I will merely add, that some palliative may perhaps be found in the season of the year, and the surrounding snow, and inclemency of weather which induces even the highly civilised Englishman of the enlightened nineteenth century to "keep the cold out" by artificial means.

Whatever may be the excuses attempted, the fact is more important than any of them, and the fact is that the whole village was drunk. Every man was distinctly and unmistakeably intoxicated; and it is to be hoped, and is indeed strongly suspected, that the men had not been so ungallant and selfish as to exclude the women and children from their share in the excitement. There were no teatallers in Karshowar. Indeed, though not myself a member of that respected body, I nevertheless should now have preferred the most whining apostle of temperance, to "the rude disciple of beer" or raki, if he had combined with his abstinence from inebriating beverage some skill in the science of coach-building. Our spacious and respectable, but clumsy britska had received an injury, and there was not a Karshowarian sufficiently sober to mend it. Two or three drunken fellows staggered up to us, seemed to gain some slight insight into our meaning, and after a futile attempt to grasp it, abandoned themselves entirely to sleeping stupidity or comic gesticulation. Such a spectacle, notwithstanding

its humorous effects, I hope and believe I shall never again witness.

The revellers of a feast of Bacchus believed in the jolly God, and deemed that they were rightly worshipping him. The procession was picturesque, and the idea poetical. There was a sentiment of religion amidst the wild exuberance and frenzy of the reeling dance; but I fear that the impulse of superstition, and the grace of classic association, were alike wanting to the gross sensual indulgence of this midday orgy.

So much snow had fallen during the night that next morning there were some doubts as to our being able to move onwards. At 10 A.M., however, to use an entirely incorrect and nautical expression, we got under weigh, sending the empty britska, oxen-drawn as before, in advance of us, and having hired for ourselves and baggage six one-horse sleighs to be used at pleasure. Sleighing may be very amusing work when one thoroughly understands it, and moreover where there is no serious danger; but sleighing down steep mountain sides, and along the brink of precipices, becomes too dangerous to afford unmixed entertainment. It is considered by the Russians themselves a service of great peril, although they are accustomed to it, and they watch most anxiously for any appearance of an avalanche. Only a few days before we crossed, an officer

had been precipitated down a considerable height, and nearly killed.

Our calèche, which had been put on sledges, broke down when we had got over only about a quarter of the distance, but it was soon repaired, and arrived at the halting-place two hours after we did.

I had divers tumbles from my sleigh ; five I can distinctly enumerate, and of two of them I have a rather vivid reminiscence,—for however grotesque or amusing to a spectator, they were to the person chiefly concerned in them extremely painful. As we were going full speed down a hill, my horse suddenly slackened his pace, and the driver of the sledge in the rear not being able to pull up in time, ran right into me, and one of the shafts struck me a severe blow in the back. It occasioned much pain at first, and I had some fears that I had received a serious injury. Twice my sleigh turned over and I was precipitated into the snow ; and in the second fall, unfortunately, it passed over my leg, and with such violence that I at first imagined that my limb was broken, for I could not for some time put it to the ground.

So full of adventure and peril is this Transcaucasian passage thought, during this period of the year, that we were compelled to take a party of men with us to dig where it was necessary, and to assist in case of accidents.

The dangers and disagreeables of the pass, however, were compensated by the wild grandeur of the scenery.* With the exception of an occasional undulation, a steep and sudden declivity with a corresponding rise of a proportionate height, the ascent of the range was continuous for miles, and very difficult. There was something, however, delightfully exhilarating in the pure rarity of the mountain air: the sky was a deep blue, and the sun shone out brightly over head. Around us, spreading far away, leagues and leagues before and behind us, lay a wilderness of snow, in its vague and almost terrible immensity. Our figures, and the shapes of our cattle and conveyance, seemed to stand out from the white landscape in such bold and conspicuous relief, that we could fancy that hundreds of miles off we might be plainly seen. Near us the snow glared almost fiercely in our faces with dazzling brightness. Farther away its lustre seemed to soften down, and catch the shadow of some flitting wreath of cloud or vapour. Jutting out from this frothy sea of snow, at wide intervals, perchance a clump, but oftener a solitary fir-tree, towered in black and fearful distinctness, as if keeping watch over the lifeless and silent solitude.

As we commenced our descent, an infinite space lay stretched before us—a very Universe of

* See Appendix.

Snow, upon whose dim horizon hung heavily large fleecy masses of cloud, fitfully changing into forms more and more fantastic—picturesque palaces of fanciful device—battlements of “kingliest masonry,” flaming with the crimson splendours of the setting sun.

When we had crossed the most dangerous part, we halted at a small house by the road, and warmed ourselves at a fire. Here we found a detachment of soldiers, with whom our military guide and “custos” held some conversation in a tongue not understood by us. We dropped some money into a box kept purposely for travellers to prove, by charity to the poor, their gratitude for having safely achieved so much of a perilous journey. This box is in a chapel, where travellers can perform their devotions—if, amid scenes of sublimity so awful, that man seems to be alone with his Maker, and even the atheist would cease to doubt, they still require such aid to worship.

We arrived at Koorbi at half-past four; halted here; and after the excitement and fatigues of the foregoing day, slept soundly until nine next morning, when we breakfasted and started once more. This day we were again fortunate in our weather until nightfall, when we reached Dariel in a heavy shower of sleet. We had travelled with rather dangerous rapidity down the side of the stupendous mountains

along a road scarped half way up, and only just broad enough for our britska. For some time after reaching the valley, we followed the course of the river Terek, and changed horses at Karsbek, where there is a château, the property of the hospitable and accomplished prince of that name. Here were a number of travellers waiting for horses; we had been more prescient, and had sent on a Cossack in advance to secure some—so were quickly *en route* again.

The road from Karsbek was one sheet of ice: so slippery was it, that at one moment the whole five horses were down together, while the fall of two or three at a time was too common an occurrence to excite surprise. We walked nearly the whole way.

My comrade, in the company of his cigar and his own cheerfulness and playful fancy, wandered on ahead of us for some distance, and the next I saw of him was at a barrier, where he emerged from a building and said he had made acquaintance with the officer who commanded the fortress of Dariel, and who strongly advised us not to proceed further at such a late hour of the night. We therefore drove into the fort and soon found ourselves in a comfortable little room. We were very kindly received by the Colonel and his two Subalterns, who gave us tea and biscuits, and regaled us also with some music and histrionics; for, about half an hour after our

refection was concluded, twenty of his soldiers came in, and sang several songs in very good time and taste, and encouraged by the success of their vocal efforts, got up a kind of *impromptu* play, which was highly entertaining.

The fort is small, but so cleverly constructed that it is strong, being built of cut stone. It has round towers, and parapets all loop-holed. It has a modern look, but may have been renovated. The situation is very picturesque, and had not I feared that my conduct would have been misunderstood, I should certainly have taken a sketch of it. At this point two roads branch off, one leading to Karsbek, along which we had travelled, the other to Schamyl's head quarters, and hence I suppose the necessity of fortifying this pass.

From the fort we enjoyed a good view of one of the castles of the Princess Tamara. The legend of this famous lady, though only in an expurgated form fit for the perusal of the young and the innocent, was in every one's mouth, amid the scenes where, even by a capricious but systematic cruelty, she had not forfeited her claim to the respect and veneration of a distant posterity. It is reported by the ignorant or, perhaps, too credulous denizens of Dariel, that this lady was, in the third century, a Queen of the mountaineers, enjoying great power and popularity among the

wild tribes of the Caucasus. The tradition lingers that she was endowed with surpassing beauty ; but that, unsatisfied with such lovers as were attracted by the fascination of her charms, she compelled all travellers in her majesty's dominions to present themselves at her castle of Dariel, which was her residence for the greater part of the year.

Beautiful herself, she admired beauty in others, and those personally plain or insignificant were treated with but a short and scant hospitality, though perhaps more than compensated by a safe exit from her feudal halls ; while those on whom "the fatal gift" had been by nature lavished, soon became the victims of her strong but dangerous love. She was as fickle as she was fair, and more cruel than either, for no sooner did some newly arrived visitor eclipse, in her imagination, the comeliness of him who had last occupied her heart, than the discarded lover, so lately the cherished object of her affections, was seized, bound hand and foot by the ruffian ministers of her unscrupulous vengeance, and hurled down a precipice in front of the château. "Dead men tell no tales," thought the Princess Tamara ; but their ghosts must have whispered the story which is so frequently told at Dariel.

What was the duration of her guilty career,

which could only be done justice to by the pen of Tacitus or Gibbon, History has not recorded. It is to be hoped, and in charity believed, that when passion had subsided, reason and religion acquired some influence over her moral nature. The sincerity of even a late repentance it might be deemed sceptical to impugn; for however great a sinner she may have been for some time on earth, she is now worshipped as a saint in heaven.

CHAPTER V.

Vladi-kavkass—The ball—Cossack villages—Norma at Arden—Robbers—Ekaterinograd—Kereem Pasha—Georgievsk—Alexandroffski—Stavropol—The Lesghian dance.

WE left Dariel at 7h. 30m. A.M., Wednesday, February 16th, bade farewell to our hospitable friend the Colonel, and travelled seven versts over the stoniest of stony roads, to the village of Laz. Thence we moved on to Vladi-kavkass, which we reached at mid-day. We were soon comfortably settled in the best hotel, which, though not very magnificent in point of accommodation, was clean and comfortable, and indeed seemed luxurious, after the narrow and dirty discomfort of the station-houses.

Our intention had originally been to proceed at once on our journey, after one day's inspection of the town; but we were pleasantly detained by the kindness and hospitality of the Vladi-Kavkasians. On the evening of our arrival, while Thompson and Polivanoff had gone to witness the performances of a conjuror, I was interrupted in the midst of my letter-writing by a visit from the Commander of the place, accompanied by Major

Count Simonich. He kindly asked us to postpone our departure for a day or two, and accept an invitation to a ball on the following Friday. A refusal was, of course, out of the question; and the next morning we returned his visit, after which we amused ourselves by driving over the place in an open sleigh.

The town is tolerably large, and laid out in broad, regular streets. It is a military cantonment, and a fortress of some size and importance stands close to the town. This I saw only at a distance. I was naturally desirous of driving through it, but was told that there really was nothing to repay me for my trouble—a delicate hint, perhaps, that an Engineer Officer should keep out of an enemy's works.

On Friday night we kept our engagement with punctuality, and attended the ball. A very good ball it was, differing only from similar entertainments of our own, in the fact, that, while there were ample and good refreshments, there was no regular supper—neither the old-fashioned and solemn sitting down to a table laden with luxuries, solid and liquid, or the crush and scramble of a London West-End evening party. The music was better than it usually is with us; and, until I thought of my numerous English friends and relatives of the fairer sex, I was going on to say that the Russian ladies

were as pretty as they are. The Commandant was the very soul of good humour and joviality. Nothing would content him but that I must come into a little side-room to drink numberless glasses of champagne, in the intervals of which he shook hands with me in a manner which could only have arisen from a mixture of hospitality and exhilaration.

On Saturday, having sent off letters to Tiflis, and breakfasted with my friend the Commandant, who was none the worse for his hesternal champagne, we left Vladi-kavkass with very pleasant reminiscences of the place and its hospitable inhabitants. We were accompanied by an officer, a Lieutenant of Engineers, employed on the *Voies de Communication*, and who lived at a place we should pass through *en route*. With his sister, a very pleasing and pretty girl, he had come into Vladi-kavkass for the gaieties of the previous evening.

At three p.m., having travelled over a tolerable road, through a flat country, with the Kubardar Mountains on the right, and the Caucasian range on the left, we arrived at the Stanitza, or small town of Arden, where, in a very comfortable house, lived our friend the Engineer. We passed through some Cossack villages, laid out with great regularity in broad streets, the whole being surrounded by a

broad ditch and strong wooden fence acting as a breast-work.

Our friend the Lieutenant of Engineers, insisted upon our halting and enjoying his kind hospitalities. We dined with him sumptuously; and after dinner his wife played to us on the piano with great taste and execution. There was something very pleasantly strange in listening to beautiful airs from "Norma" in a remote Cossack village. Her husband and myself became great friends; but friendship has its penalties; for at parting he insisted on greeting me with a fraternal kiss. Such salutes certainly do not come under the class of

"Oscula quæ Venus
Quintâ parte sui nectaris imbuit,"

and at first astonish the phlegmatic and practical Englishman; but one gradually gets accustomed to most things, even a pair of moustaches on one's cheek. Moreover, he had paid me the compliment of saying how much, as an Engineer Officer, he should like to serve under me.

We left at five P.M., though it was considered unsafe to travel after four, in consequence of the robbers by whom the road was infested. In reliance, however, on the *vacui coram latrone* sentiment, as well as our pistols, and influenced also by a strong desire to make up for lost time, we deter-

mined on proceeding, though in doing so I believe we violated the law. On arriving at a station about twenty-two versts distant, we found that unless we at once went on, we should be delayed the next day for want of horses, so we started again and reached Alexandroffski at 10h. 30m. P.M. without a sanguinary encounter with brigands, or any other romantic adventure.

On Saturday the 20th we reached Ekaterinograd, having travelled only, owing to the state of the roads, thirty-two versts in five hours, passing through a flat uninteresting country and a few Cossack villages.

Ekaterinograd is a Cossack town, on a larger scale than any we had previously seen, and boasting an hotel where the accommodation was not by any means first-rate, and everything dirty.* There are three churches, presenting no features of interest.

On Monday the 21st, as we were upon the point of starting, who should arrive but our old ally and friend, Kereem Pasha, whom we had left behind us at Vladi-kavkass? Reaching the Post-House while we were waiting at the hotel, he took possession of all the horses, and moved on, leaving us, very much against our will, stationary. I am sure that

* I go into these, perhaps somewhat uninteresting details, for the sake of English tourists, who will now flock in numbers to Russia.

he was ignorant of the fact that we were waiting there ; for he had always expressed himself in such strong terms of friendship and gratitude to us, that he would never have treated us in so treacherous a manner. Such a man is to be relied on as the soul of honour and politeness ; and the Turk is not addicted to practical jokes. They are quite beneath the serene gravity of his nature.

We were therefore delayed until half-past ten, intending to travel *viâ* Stavropol, Novo Tcherkass, and Tamboff, but were informed that the road to Penza by way of Astracan was the better of the two routes. This was the suggestion of the Postmaster, and adopting it, we started, as we imagined, on the right road. To our infinite surprise and annoyance, however, we discovered at the first station sixteen versts distant from Ekaterinograd, that the coachman had misunderstood his orders, and that we were on the route we originally intended to take. It was now too late to retrace our steps without useless waste of time, and therefore travelling on still through a flat, dull country, we reached Georgievsk in time for supper. I do not remember that we ordered anything very superb or sumptuous in the way of refectation, but our bill next morning was startling in amount. It was very evident that English prisoners were *raræ aves* in these parts ; and Russian landlords, like other folk, are under

an impression that it is politic to make hay while the sun shines.

Passing through Alexandroffski after a two days' journey we reached Stavropol at midnight. The only inn we found open was a little hostelry of the pothouse genus—cold and wretched; but we supped, and by the help of our mattresses and some blankets managed to get through the night. Next day we drove about the town. It contains from 30,000 to 40,000 inhabitants, has good shops, and a theatre. The streets are broad and regular, with a boulevard, which, in summer, when the trees are in leaf, must be very pretty. In the evening we dined at the club, a small, but very well arranged and comfortable institution, and large enough for the society. With the Russian officers, who had so kindly placed it at our disposal, we had a great deal of conversation, especially on the subject of Kars.

On Friday the 25th we received an invitation to dine with General Koslovsky, who commands the Cis-caucasian Army under General Mouravieff. He was a fine officer, and had seen a great deal of service. He spoke no language but Russian, but Madame was quite an adept at French. All who could speak English were invited; and among them Madame Kapherr, sister of the Count Meydem, whom we had met at Colonel Esachoff's at

breakfast the day on which we left the Russian Camp. An English lady, governess in a Russian family, welcomed her compatriots with much hearty and pleasant kindness. There was one feature of the entertainment which greatly diverted us,—a piece of roast beef and a plum-pudding, which had been procured to gratify English appetites and English vanity. I cannot, however, admit that the effort was as successful as it deserved to be. The beef was only beef by courtesy, being the flesh of antelope, or something equally good, but lacking the substantiality and flavour of the roast beef of Old England.

In the evening we drank tea in the house of Madame Varpachoffsky. Her daughters—two very charming] young ladies—sang with great taste and spirit; and one of them very good-naturedly danced the Lesghian dance, which we had never seen [before. It is very graceful and fantastic. The *danseuse* is in a stooping attitude; the right arm held in front of the forehead, and the left behind the back, while the feet slide, without being lifted, along the ground. The movement is slow; the music original and pretty. The eldest read aloud to us some lines of Byron with an accent that was quite endearing. Incited by curiosity, and anxious to see all we could, we were ungallant enough to leave this charming circle as early as

nine, for the sake of going to the theatre; and I here record, by way of warning to all about to behave in a similar manner, that we were dreadfully disappointed, and subjected to the infliction of a sorry performance, which ill-requited us for the sacrifice we had made.

Having visited Lieutenant Petroff of the Dragoons, and called to pay our respects to the Governor of the place, who was suffering from indisposition, which he pleaded as an excuse for not having shown us hospitality, we left Stavropol, glad to have accomplished so much of our long and arduous journey.

CHAPTER VI.

Books in Russia—Russian serfdom—Not “slaves” in the worst sense—Their education, &c.—*En route again*—Stuck in the mud—Station house—My sleighing again—Tymeiovskaia—Novo Tchirkass—The Don and the Volga—Wolves—The Padre André—Generosity of the inhabitants—Intoxication again—A fortunate arrival—Paratorovfskaia.

THE majority of writers on Russia and her institutions, especially those whose books have been given to the world during the late War, have spoken with great severity of the treatment which the serfs receive at the hands of their masters. I am glad to say that, from such powers of observation as I could exercise during my long journey, I cannot substantiate such charges; and what I saw and heard, and the conclusions I drew from my, perhaps, not sufficient experience, I shall write, without fear of any charges of philo-Russianism which may be brought against me in a style, and with ability superior to my own.

Every property in Russia has a certain number of peasants attached to it, who are bought and sold with the land. They belong wholly to the proprietors; but yet the offensive word “slave,” which grates so harshly on the English ear, is not strictly

applicable to them. They are protected by law, enjoy certain rights and privileges, and are not subjected to the horrors and cruelties of American slavery. That the institution is indefensible no one will more readily admit than myself. That human beings should be sold like goods and chattels, is repugnant to any sound view of morals, and to all the best instincts of the nature given by Him, in whose image lord and serf were alike created. But millions of the human race have consented to what they scarcely knew to be a degradation; and, while a great country like Russia can, and must hereafter by degrees, emancipate, and give the rights of citizenship to her humblest peasants, those who imagine that our own enlightenment and progress are suitable for every race and every age, must be strangely ignorant of the history of the world.

Without theorising, however, on a matter which has been frequently enough a theme of discussion, I content myself with stating the facts with which I became acquainted.

The peasants, or serfs, are obliged to reside on the property to which they are attached, together with their wives and families. Three days of the week they are compelled by law to work for their masters, tilling the fields, or toiling in the Fabrique, as the case may be. Three days they are permitted to work on their own allotments; and Sunday is a

day of rest. Their proprietor is bound by law to feed and clothe them ; to maintain them in sickness as well as in health ; and the children cannot be called on to labour until they have attained a certain age. When a serf wishes to marry he must obtain his master's consent ; but the occasion is very rare when any obstacle is thrown in his way. It must be admitted, that any suggestion from his master, as to the propriety of his choice, would meet with very prompt and obedient attention. The master has a right to punish them corporeally, and in other ways, provided he does not violate the law. Should he in any way neglect them, give them scant clothing, or insufficient food, they are permitted to appeal to the government ; and if, after inquiry, their complaint is found to rest on true foundations, the proprietor is at once displaced, and his estate consigned to the management of another person, specially appointed. The peasants are not blessed by any education which is really worthy of the name ; for there is no moral training whatever in the schooling which is given to them. It usually consists of a mechanical tuition in reading, writing, and arithmetic, but in some districts they receive no instruction whatever.

As far as the physical condition of the serfs is concerned, they look well and happy. It is, however, somewhat shocking to hear a man's fortune, or still worse a woman's dowry, estimated, not by the

number of acres, but by the number of serfs they possess.

But to return to my travels. Reminiscences arise of dreadful roads at this part of the journey, level and stupid landscape, slow travelling from station to station; indeed, in some places it was worse than slow, for it was non-progress. When we had passed Bēsaparsenia and Leipskiah, we got fairly stuck in the mud up to the axle-trees. Not an inch could we move our cumbrous vehicle. The provisions with the luggage having gone a-head of us in the lighter conveyance, which carried them, here we were without anything but bread and cheese to solace our hunger. We accordingly struck a light, sat inside the britska, consumed some of the aforesaid simple provender, and sent a mounted Cossack on to the nearest station, several versts' distance, to fetch some oxen. Our efforts to sleep were rather unsuccessful; and the night seemed, under such extremely uninteresting circumstances, interminable.

The oxen arrived at about 3 P.M.; and, after many futile attempts to dislodge the carriage, it was necessary for us to descend into the mud ourselves, and thus lightening it somewhat at the expense of personal comfort, it was lifted out of its clayey embedment, and once more moving slowing and clumsily forward. The person who had suffered most from this night of compulsory stagnation was the faithful

Schaller; who, inasmuch as we could not make room for him in the carriage, was obliged to sit on the box, exposed to the wet and cold, in a region which all writers, ancient and modern, have agreed in describing as bleak and inhospitable, swept by raging winds and visited by frequent rain.

We had passed the Trans- and Cis-Caucasian provinces, and were in Russia itself by the 1st February, and in the country of the Don, passing through stations, the three following days, which delighted in the euphonious names of Merkoulowskaia, Protopovskaia, and Kaganlivskaia. By the advice of the postmaster at this last station we put the sleighs on our carriage; but, the snow not being deep enough, we had speedily to betake ourselves to the tardier wheel. We now reached a chaussée constructed over a swamp, which is caused by the overflowing of the Don. It is a fine work of art, and has numerous well-built wooden bridges at intervals, and many earthen batteries, with guns ready for being mounted, and intended, I suppose, to sweep the river in the event of an enemy approaching in that direction. The causeway extended for nine versts; and, at the end, we descended from our Tarantass, or carriage, and walked across the Don over the ice.

On the opposite bank we encountered quite a

concourse of people, whose curiosity had prompted them to come, like the Tiflisians, and have a stare at us. We had now reached the village of Oxaye, where we entered a primitive little inn. We were treated with great respect by everyone, and the landlord thought we should be more quiet in a little parlour of his own, where we were only subjected to the gaze of his own three black-eyed and comely daughters.

One more station I remember under somewhat disagreeable circumstances. We arrived at Zmeivskaia late at night, had exhausted our own stock of provisions, and, as we could procure nothing in the place at that hour, went supperless to bed.

In approaching *Novo Tchirkass* we saw several large vessels imbedded in the ice of the Don. The view of this town, as you draw near to it, is highly picturesque. The ascent to it is up a steep hill, and the entrance under a fine arch erected to the memory of Hettman Platoff, the great Cossack chief, who died here; and of whom there is also, in the town, a large bronze statue. The place has nothing that is remarkable about it. It is Cossack, the streets broad and the shops good.

The river Don which flows so close to this place, empties itself into the sea of Azov, and is at one point not more than forty miles distant from the Volga, that magnificent stream which flows into

“the sunny Caspian.” The intervening distance is in a level country very similar to that over which we had been travelling. It is but natural, therefore, to imagine that the idea of cutting a canal which should reach from one to the other of these navigable streams, and thus unite them, should occur to some scientific man, reflecting on the great benefit which would arise to commerce from so feasible a project. The Turks were, at one time, most anxious to undertake the work for the purpose of connecting the waters of the Caspian with those of the Black Sea; and the first time that they came into collision with Russia was on the occasion of their attempting to open the trade with Central Asia by these means. The Russian Government probably had special reasons for not attempting this kind of communication, as the Russian engineers may have, from a closer inspection, discovered difficulties unknown to me: for at present they content themselves with a rail or rather tram-road, along which, however, vessels of considerable size may be transported.

At Novo Tchirkass we determined upon selling the *britska*, to which I have already alluded so frequently in contemptuous and perhaps abusive language. To any adventurous fellow-countryman, intending, after he has witnessed the Coronation at Moscow, to travel, from choice, on ground over which we journeyed from compulsion, I should say

most emphatically, avoid anything but the lightest vehicle that is to be procured. Our ponderous calèche, which had caused us so many delays, and to which, despite our long use of it, we had in no degree grown attached, we now handed over to the governor of Novo Tchirkass, and, at the expense of the government, purchased a new conveyance for 100 silver roubles (16*l.*). It resembled the body of a brougham on sleighs, and was merely a framework covered with felt and painted canvass. It was far lighter and nearly as commodious as the britska we had, in an evil hour, selected at Tiflis. Such changes in our arrangements as it involved were all for the better. We now found three horses do the work for which we had previously required five. We had two carts instead of one for our luggage, Schaller travelling upon one, and Kadri, Thompson's Turkish servant, on the other.

After leaving Novo Tchirkass, and passing Kalinofskaia, we drove over the frozen Danietta, or little Don.

The following day (Thursday, February 7th), near Casanski, we saw two very fine wolves on the road, within twenty yards of us. I forget whether their tameness was shocking to me, but I know that their contempt for us appeared to be unmitigated, for they scarcely moved out of our way. If we could have got at our pistols in time, we should

certainly have sought to disturb their equanimity by having a pop at them.

We now soon left the Moscow high road, and took a direction towards Tamboff, again crossing the Don. Our next stations were Adrianski and Tichinski. At the latter place, while we were sitting in our carriage, an invitation was brought to us from the priest of the village, Padré André, requesting that we would do him the honour of drinking tea with him. He was a fine handsome looking man, with a most benevolent countenance. We found him with an officer of Cossacks, Major Alexsey, in the Justice-room, near which we had halted. We accompanied the Padre to his own house, which was a very prettily furnished and comfortable abode. We were then introduced to his wife, daughter, and several other ladies. None of this party spoke any language but Russian, and Polivanoff was, therefore, obliged to interpret for us.

We were most plentifully supplied with wine, biscuits, and vodki. Padré Alexsey, the father of the Major, was much affected at the idea of our being prisoners so far away from our homes. He insisted upon our accompanying him to his house, which was adjacent to the church of the village: here we were again invited and pressed to partake of caviar, fish, biscuits, wine, and vodki. The Russians take no denial, and drink vodki (the spirit of the country)

as if it were water. The scene here would have presented excellent points for the pencil of Leech or Cruikshank, though the peculiar opinions of the latter would have been greatly shocked. Although it was getting very late, our hospitable entertainers would not permit us to leave. Glass after glass of vodki was poured out. A crowd had accompanied us from house to house. At length the aged priest insisted on proposing a toast, and in a speech in Russian, of course entirely incomprehensible to us, proposed the health of Alexander, Emperor of all the Russias, and Victoria, Queen of England, amid loud and enthusiastic cheers. He next kissed us frequently with the most fervid affection, and finally asked us if we would receive his blessing. He said that he worshipped the same God that we did, though in a different manner, and hoped that we would not refuse.

He then placed his hands on our heads and recited some prayer in a fervent manner. In the warmth of his devotion, which it would be unkind to say had warmed to fever heat by the aid of the vodki, he dropped his hat into our carriage, and it was not till after some time that we discovered it.

We received spiritual and spirituous, but also substantial, favours from the Padré and the worthy inhabitants of the village. The families, to whose houses we had paid but the transient visit of a few

moments, vied with each other in lavishing on us provisions for the journey. There was little fear of fainting by the way, had we accepted all that was proffered to us. Among other contributions of bread, biscuits, and salt—especially meant to be symbolical of their benevolence towards us,—there were three or four large geese and turkeys, trussed and ready for the spit. One of these was presented to us by the Hettman or chief of the village, and we naturally thought that a few silver roubles, as a reward for this delicate attention, might with safety be offered. We were caught however by the Padre in the act, and the Hettman was immediately ordered to return us our money.

Having drank] more vodki than certainly was my wont, I left these strange, kind-hearted and simple people, with many heartfelt good wishes for their prosperity, and thanks for all their well-meant kindness. I doubt whether any Englishman had been in this secluded hamlet before, and if the next tourist who passes it is as hospitably received, and has as much presented to his view affording subject for reflection, as well as amusement, he will not regret having sojourned for a few hours at Tichinski.

It was late before we had been permitted to depart, and we now travelled during the night to Paratorovskaia: a bright moon over head lighted up our road

with many soft and beautiful effects, while we were thinking over the strange scene we had witnessed.

Our adventures, however, were not, it seemed, meant to end here. We arrived very late at the station, and halting at the Court House, found it filled with Cossacks, all more or less in a state of inebriety. Their chief, or head-man, who was seated in great state at the head of the table, was particularly and pre-eminently drunk. This worthy individual, upon being presented with the written order by which we were empowered to use horses for our journey, turned it first in one way, then in another, with many vain endeavours to comprehend its contents. He at last, by dint of a spasmodic effort, in a short lucid interval, discovered that we were prisoners, and in this period the cunning of intoxication forthwith suggested that he could not supply us with horses because he had no armed escort to attend us, and we might run away. Fortunately at this conjuncture there entered another officer, who had heard of our arrival, and whose wine-inspired mood had only reached the phase of hilarity. He informed us that there had been that day in the village as many as three weddings, and that grand rejoicings had prevailed. He at once ordered horses to be got ready for us, and meanwhile invited us to proceed to his house, and partake of what cheer he could offer. Here we found

his wife, daughter-in-law, (a pretty, interesting looking girl,) and other ladies. The everlasting vodki was copiously poured out and handed round, and various toasts proposed. We were very kindly pressed to stay to supper, and we did not leave the village until a late hour, when we proceeded a few versts and halted on the high road.

CHAPTER VII.

Novo Kapiersck—The river Kapor—Tamboff—The Governor and his family—The theatre—Bondari—The factory—Interior of the Fabrique—Mons. de Lion's stud—Horse-breeding in Russia.

WE now determined to get on to Tamboff with as little delay as possible, and on the 10th February we travelled seventy-eight versts, and reached it at 8.30 P.M. We dined at the principal inn, but found it so dirty that we slept at the Station House—an equivocal expression, were I speaking of my native land, and not of Russia.

We had by this time passed through the Country of the Don, and crossed the river Kapor, which forms the natural boundary. In two days we reached Tamboff, after a journey of ninety-three versts on each day. Here we were more fortunate than at Novo Kapiersck, and, though the principal hotel was very full, succeeded in procuring very comfortable apartments.

On Wednesday the 13th the Governor of Tamboff sent a message to us that he was obliged to start at noon for St. Petersburg, and hoped that we

would breakfast with him, as he was very anxious to see us before he left.

We accordingly waited upon him, and found a number of persons who had assembled to bid him adieu. His house was on a grand scale, and handsomely fitted up. His wife and daughters were very charming people, and spoke English with fluency. We waited in the drawing-room while mass was being celebrated in the saloon. We then sat down to a sumptuous entertainment, which was served in the breakfast hall. We received the utmost kindness and attention.

The Governor's wife, Madame Danzas, insisted upon our dining with them. As the youngest daughter had accompanied her father to St. Petersburg, our party was a small but very pleasant one, and after dinner we were invited, with the ladies, to a soirée and dance at the house of Monsieur de Lion, the *Maréchal de la Noblesse*. My friend Thompson, who was a good and indefatigable dancer, accompanied them; but I was somewhat fatigued and made my apologies.

Tamboff is a large town, numbering about 20,000 inhabitants. The streets are broad, the shops good, and the houses handsome. The government of Tamboff is very extensive, there being between one and two million of inhabitants. It is famous for its breed of horses.

The following evening we paid a visit to the theatre. A traveller knows nothing of a place until he has seen its amusements. We sat in the governor's box, which was very comfortable, fitted with sofas and ottomans. Here we drank our coffee and spent the greater part of the evening. The Theatre was a pretty building, and the singing of some Italians rather mediocre. After the performance we supped at the house of Madame Kikinn, a widow lady, highly esteemed for her mental and personal charms, and evidently very popular at Tamboff. At her house we again had the pleasure of meeting Madame and Monsieur de Lion. She sang us some songs delightfully, having been taught singing in Italy, and they both had travelled a great deal; he had visited England.

On the following Sunday we dined at Monsieur de Lion's. His *maison* is furnished in magnificent style, filled with curiosities, and some of the inlaid tables rich and gorgeous. While at dinner his private band of thirty performers played in the hall.

Very sorry to leave our accomplished and hospitable friends, we were nevertheless obliged to proceed Penza-wards. Our friend and *custos* Polivanoff was anxious to reach his family as soon as possible. He had been given but a short leave of absence, and had not seen them for two years.

Monsieur de Lion insisted on our travelling a little out of our way to make his country seat at Bondari our first halting-place ; and he preceded us during the night. We did not reach it till the afternoon of the following day, as it is sixty versts from Tamboff. His residence was quite magnificent—the word “palace” the only one which can adequately describe it. The rooms were spacious and lofty, one of which formed a picture-gallery, containing paintings by some of the best masters collected at a considerable outlay, and with excellent taste. There was quite a museum of curiosities the most heterogeneous, and a large winter garden added to its other attractions.

At night we paid a visit to his colossal Fabrique or Factory, where, on a very large scale, he manufactures cloth for the use of the Russian army. Some idea of its dimensions may be gained from the fact that he employs 4000 workmen, who—with the sole exception of Sunday—are in turns toiling night and day in it. The superintendents are most of them Frenchmen.

The general view of the Fabrique is highly picturesque. It stands on sloping ground with a stream flowing at its base, over which is a wooden bridge. On the hill is a large round building with porticos, surmounted by a dome with a cross above it. Running at right angles with this is the Factory

itself—not high, but of immense length; its lofty chimney, like those of our manufacturing towns, pouring out a dense volume of smoke above. The grounds are prettily wooded, and there is a combination of town and country about the place which relieves the mind of that oppressive feeling of incessant, unrelenting toil, which seems to overwhelm one in a scene dedicated to manual labour, and the unceasing rush of machinery. The interior presents many features of interest; among others, a spacious drying-ground in the open air.

Monsieur de Lion breeds a vast number of horses, and is very justly proud of his stud. He took us all over his stables, which are extensive, and well arranged. He has about 120 mares and horses, and numerous colts and fillies. The breed is that of the Countess Orloff, which is very celebrated in Russia. In no country is greater attention paid to the breeding of horses; especially in the districts through which we had passed, where, from time immemorial, the inhabitants having been wild and nomad in their habits, horses had been to them perhaps the first necessary of life. Moreover, in days ere steam was dreamed of as a locomotive power, and in provinces where it is still regarded as one of the arcana of science, the distances of which the Emperor complained to the Marquis de Custine, could scarcely be got over, except by the help of

these useful and noble quadrupeds. Besides, the Russians, having vast tracts of pasture lands, enjoy great facility for breeding them. In the Government of Tamboff is a statistical table of studs belonging to private individuals, and doubtless including that of my friend Monsieur de Lion. I find that these studs come under the first class, and that there are no less than 134, making up an aggregate of 6871 horses. The calculation made by Russian statisticians is that there are, in the European possessions of Russia alone, 18,000,000 of horses. In the Government of Tamboff there are as many as 38 horses to every 100 inhabitants, a very large proportion, and only exceeded by the provinces of Arenberg, Simbirsk, Saratow, Mohilew, Smolensk, Kursk, Astrakhan, Riazan, Toala, Orel, and the country of the Don Cossacks. "Amongst the Russian horses," says Monsieur de Tegoborski,* "the best breeds trace their origin to the studs of the Countess Orloff and Count Rostoptschine, and there are few studs of much reputation which do not possess some mares and stallions issuing from such sources. Here, then, we possess a fund of reproduction which only requires a little care on the part of breeders to insure a large development for this branch of rural economy. It is a vast field open

* "Commentaries on the Productive Forces of Russia," by M. L. de Tegoborski, vol. i. p. 294.

for the progress of national wealth, of which the rearing of domestic animals is one of the principal elements."

"The degree of benefit that may be drawn from a horse in the different purposes to which he is applied, depends especially upon the care bestowed upon his rearing. England supplies us with the best example of the perfection that may be attained in this department. It has been calculated that the motive power of an English horse is equal to that of three German horses, and if we compare the quantity of labour in the fields executed by an English horse and by a Russian horse respectively, we shall attain a similar result. With us, in most districts, the peasants' horses are smaller and weaker than they are even in Germany; and we may assume without exaggeration, that by regenerating the breed, we should obtain from the same number of horses triple the motive power which is now obtained from them—an immense increase of productive force gained to the country."

"In the countries of Central and Western Europe, the future prospects of improvement in the breeds of horses may in the course of time be more or less compromised by the immense extension of railways. In Russia this casualty is still exceedingly remote. The epoch at which the whole empire may be traversed by means of steam, from east to west, and

from north to south, is a very distant one ; and even when the gigantic labours of which this implies the undertaking, shall have been accomplished, there will remain a vast network of intermediate roads over this immense space ; and these new facilities of communication, by giving a strong impulse to the industry and commerce of the country, will multiply the demands for motive power, both for the locomotion of the inhabitants, and for the transport of goods along the thousand railway feeders ; so that this prospect, distant as it is, encourages, instead of threatening, the interests of our horse rearers."

For these and other reasons, the Russian Cavalry has always been, and in all probability will be, a very strong branch of their army. The Crimea afforded but little room for its operations ; and we had no force with which to try its powers before Kars.

CHAPTER VIII.

Penza—Society—The militia—Public gardens—Music—Board and lodging—Price of wines—Kindness and hospitality—Services at cathedral—Banquet to the Governor—The Czar's letter—Rumours of peace—The Institute—Easter-day—Free at last—Russian civilisation—Intellectual culture—Our intended route—Gifts and souvenirs—Nijni Novogorod—Appearance of the town—Russian peasants—Vladimir.

WE left Bondari at 5 P.M. Monsieur de Lion provided most comfortably for our wants on the road. Trusting to the good cheer which he had so copiously lavished on us we determined to travel all night ; but somewhat repented of our rash resolve. So bitterly cold was it that the wine in the carriage, notwithstanding the windows being closed, was completely frozen, and we had some difficulty in so thawing it as to make it available for obvious purposes.

We got over 94 versts, breakfasted at a Station House, and proceeded all day, moving on all night and the next day, and on Tuesday night, February 19th, slept for four hours at a dirty Station House, where we almost perished with cold. The following day we reached Penza, after the journeys with which

I fear my readers are as wearied as we were, and which lasted six weeks all but a day.

We at first rested our fatigued bodies at the Hotel de Dresde, but by the advice of Prince Gargarine, moved to the Hotel Woronzoff.

Penza is a pretty town situate on the river Sura, and the stream Penza, from which it takes its name, runs also close to it. The population is about 20,000,* but the government of Penza is very large. What the surrounding scenery was it is impossible for me to say without drawing more on my imagination than is permitted even to a traveller; for, during the whole of my visit, the country was covered with snow. Its surface was somewhat flat or only gently undulating. The climate was described as mild, and it may be so in comparison with some other places in Russia, or in other seasons; but, during our sojourn the cold seemed to be intense, and at home I have never felt anything equal to it.

The suburbs are said to be very picturesque. In summer, all persons of good fortune retire to their country seats, situate between twenty and one hundred versts from the town; but in the winter they all come together again to promote warmth and society, and at that time Penza is one of the gayest

* Here I am at issue with Mr. M'Culloch, who in his Commercial Dictionary numbers the inhabitants at 11,000.

places in Europe. Its pleasant and hospitable denizens keep up one continued round of dinner-parties, balls and concerts, and very highly educated and accomplished people the majority of them are. We were told that the season we spent there was not a fair specimen of their usual gaiety, because the war had here, as elsewhere, somewhat clouded the usual gaiety of Russian society. I should scarcely, however, have detected it, so many were the genial and kind receptions given to my friend and myself.

Penza had, however, made most patriotic efforts during the war. Almost all the young men in the place had joined the militia. The local government had furnished eleven cohorts for this service, each cohort consisting of 1060 men, with a certain number of officers. Every proprietor contributed according to the number of his peasants, in the proportion of twenty-three to one thousand. They were fed, clothed, and accoutred by their masters for the first nine months, and did not cost the government one farthing.

The public institutions consist of the Gymnase, the Institute, the Convent for men and that for women. The Cathedral is a fine edifice, the interior handsomely decorated, and containing some good pictures. In the winter the upper part is closed, and service is performed in the lower story, since it is impossible to keep the other warm.

The private houses are excellent, some very large, and most of them handsomely furnished. Among the best were those of the Governor, Mr. Alsufieff, and General Arapoff.

About four versts from Penza are the Public Gardens, the property of the Crown, which in summer are very pretty, and kept up in very good style and with much taste. It is the favourite drive and walk of such of the inhabitants as are compelled to remain in the town during the summer, from having no country houses, or from being on duty.

The garrison consists of about one thousand men, being mostly recruits, and intended merely for this duty.

Penza is famous for music. "The Heaven-descended Maid" appears to have alighted here when she left, though for a time, what Shelley calls—

"Some world far from ours,
Where music and moonlight and feeling are one."

The Penzaites are ardent worshippers of sweet sounds, and in private life excellent vocal and instrumental music might almost everywhere be heard. So far does this idolatry carry them that their peal of bells is the best that I ever remember to have heard.

I may mention to my reader, in the strictest

confidence, that I can and sometimes do play the cornopean. I found little difficulty in getting an accompaniment here whenever I wished it, and I sometimes wiled away an hour with it at my hotel, perhaps to the confusion of my brother inmates. I am reminded of this by a letter of my poor dear friend Thompson, who writes to one of his relations at home, "The Colonel is playing mournful airs on his cornet à piston, and thinking no doubt of old England and friends there." The Governor of the place had an excellent band of between thirty and forty performers, all his own peasants. They play at his house, and on an evening once in the week he gives a reception to any one who may like to go.

At our hotel we occupied three suites of rooms—not a bad cell for a wretched captive. Each consisted of a small entrance passage, a large airy sitting-room, and a small bed-room, well furnished, and very comfortable. Thompson occupied one suite, I another, and our two servants the third. For these we paid sixty-five silver roubles per month, about £11.

Of those familiar but important terms Board and Lodging, the former was by far the most expensive. We paid a rouble a head for dinners, and one-and-a-quarter for breakfast. The wines were not good, and very costly. To tourists who may make

economy in any way an object, I would venture to suggest that, even during the warmth of the approaching autumn, they must lay aside their predilection for champagne or even bitter ale. For a bottle of *cremant* be prepared, O uninitiated traveller, to draw from your fob six silver roubles, or one pound sterling; for a draught of Bass' bitter ale, four, or thirteen shillings and fourpence! If Mr. Oliveira, M.P., could succeed in adding the Russians to the Anglo-French Free Trade Alliance, he would vastly convenience the consumers, and I hope benefit the producers, too.

My diary at Penza is such a repetition of pleasant parties, kind attentions, and all that is agreeable to remember, that I fear I shall shock the minds of well-regulated people who probably think that a prisoner should have been consistently miserable, or that an Englishman should never admire, or, if he does, should not laud, the graces of Foreign Society.

My friend and myself owed much to the considerate and graceful kindnesses we at all hands received. His health had been much impaired by all that he had undergone at Kars, and the severity of the weather during our journey. At Penza, toward the end of our stay there, he was confined to his room by ill-health, and the attentions and sincere acts of friendship which he experienced, at

the hands of many, to whom, though I do not feel that I should be justified in naming, I here tender my sincerest thanks, and those of his bereaved family.

There were, during our stay, some occasions of public interest, with a short description of which I will for a short time detain the reader.

On the 1st of March a service for the dead was performed in the Cathedral, it being the anniversary of the Emperor Nicholas's death. The ceremony was imposing, but long, intricate, and one that would largely tax my powers of description, without adequately compensating the reader for such an effort. On the following day there was another service on a different occasion, a grand mass to celebrate the accession of the Emperor Alexander.

On the 5th we were invited to a public dinner given by the Noblesse to the Governor, in honour of his having served for twenty-five years in that capacity. We sat down—230 ; and the whole thing was managed with great order and tact. It was a very animating scene. Nothing could exceed the enthusiasm with which the health of the Governor was drunk, except perhaps the applause which had greeted the toast of the Emperor. They must both be popular in the highest degree, if the raptures expressed were not fictitious, and I see no reason for thinking that they were so. An autograph

letter from the Czar to the Governor was read aloud amidst repeated plaudits. This letter had been accompanied by a present of a very costly and splendid snuff-box, gold, set in diamonds, with a portrait of His Imperial Majesty. The son and grandsons of the Governor had, in commemoration of the event, been created Pages of Honour.

Among other toasts was that of the visitors. My friend and myself being the only guests present, we of course duly acknowledged it, and indeed I did so with the most heartfelt emotion. The toast was received with the greatest enthusiasm, the whole company rising and bowing to us, while some of those who were personal friends or acquaintances, came round and touched glasses with us in token of their good-will and sincerity.

During the early part of this month (March) we were in one continued whirl of pleasure and excitement. The Governor now and then entertained with great state and splendour; the music at his evening parties was admirable, and the dancing always kept up with great spirit.

We were at this time continually tantalised by rumours that peace had been declared, and subsequent reports that it had been confirmed. Our intense anxiety on this point will easily be understood, all the festivities and amusements notwithstanding.

On the 20th, I visited the Institute in company with Mr. Abukoff, one of the directors. The building is very grand and commodious, and all the arrangements good. We saw the boys at their studies, and afterwards at their dinner. There did not seem to be on their part any lack of diligence at either employment. There were as many as 115; and they are received there between the ages of ten and seventeen. They are all dressed in a neat uniform, and looked healthy and happy enough. During the following day we inspected the Gymnase, which bears a striking resemblance to the Institute.

During the forty days which answer in the Greek church to our fast of Lent, Penza was quite an altered place. The Russians keep this sacred time with great strictness, and all amusements and pleasures are suspended. From the 20th to the 27th of April was what would be here called Passion-week the asceticism of the fast is carried to its highest extent.

On the 26th I went to the cathedral to witness the ceremony of the Resuscitation. It was interesting, but somewhat tedious, as it lasted four hours and a-half. Everyone was in full dress, and the ladies in white, showing manifest symptoms of genuine fasting, by their pale and wan aspect. It might well be so; for those who had kept the season strictly, had not tasted animal food for seven weeks.

All hold lighted tapers in their hands. When the clock strikes twelve, the archbishop leaves the inner chapel, where he has been praying for the sins of the people ; he is followed by a large retinue of subordinate priests and retainers, carrying crucifixes, images, and banners. The whole procession walk down the aisles, and out of the doors, and are supposed to go to the grave, and look for the body of our Saviour. They then return, and the Archbishop declares in a loud and solemn tone, *Christos vos Chris* (Christ is risen), to which the congregation respond that they believe in His Resurrection. And thus the imposing ceremony concludes ; the priests bearing incense amid the assembled multitude, and the choral litanies echoing through the cathedral aisles. A scene then ensues which does not add to the sublimity of the other associations, for thereon follows a general kissing. This ceremony must be well understood, and it has been described minutely by so many travellers, that I will merely say, that by my male friends, I was kissed with much prodigality ; and that it is a custom which, according to the old quotation, I wish were more honoured in the breach than in the observance. This is, perhaps, an arrogant and ungracious remark ; but it is meant to give no offence to my dear friends at Penza, but merely to express an English prejudice emphatically.

The next service which I heard in this building was for the present Emperor's birthday ; after which I attended a general guard-mounting parade, which had been ordered expressly for my inspection. The troops marched past in slow and double-time, and did it well. They were admirably dressed and accoutred, and were very steady under arms. Colonel Kamishansky, the officer in command, sent me a written invitation. General Arapoff was also present. The officer on duty came up, and gave me the written parole ; and, in short, every compliment was paid to me. There was a vast concourse of people to witness the affair. My comrade was unwell, and could not attend.

On the morning of the 30th, the governor of the place sent for me, and told me he had just received orders to inform us that we were no longer prisoners of war, and that we might proceed home by any route we liked. Despite all the kindnesses we had received, and the pleasures we had enjoyed, we were home-sick enough, and soon determined upon returning *via* Moscow and St. Petersburg, as quicker and more agreeable than by Odessa. There was something very gratifying in the sensation of being once again, not only in name, but in reality, "a free Briton." I felt this, notwithstanding the fact that our captivity had been almost nominal.

Everything had been done to lighten even the

imaginary chain of our bondage, and I shall ever think of Penza with lively feelings of pleasure and gratitude.

And yet, indeed, I can say no more in favour of Penza than I can of any other part of Russia, with one or two exceptions which I have previously mentioned. I must repeat, that in social accomplishments, in the arts of courtesy, and in kindred gracefulnesses, much that we have heard against Russian society has no foundation in fact. Of the genial and boundless hospitality of my friends at Penza and elsewhere, I have already spoken in detail; but there is yet another apprehension, entertained by my countrymen, which should be removed. I allude to the state of education in the interior. Surrounded as Russia is by civilisation, we are accustomed to consider that her borders only have culture, refinement, and education, whilst the people of the interior we graciously conceive to combine the ferocity of the Kaffir, with the social cheerfulness of the Esquimaux. No greater mistake could be made.

In the large towns through which I passed, there exists great culture. To the matter of languages, especially, the utmost attention is paid. Children, from their earliest infancy, are taught French and German; and it is most rare to meet with a lady who does not speak these two languages, at all events, with precision and fluency. They are,

in fact, so accustomed to the French, that the ladies usually employ it for general conversation. English is not nearly so well known, owing in all probability to the very slight extent to which the interior of Russia is "done" by our autumnal travellers. But, nevertheless, it is by no means uncommon in the larger towns. It would really appear that the Russians have a special facility for languages. The men, who in that country as elsewhere, will insist on reserving the best of everything, even in education, to themselves, are highly cultivated, especially the large numbers who serve the Government. In addition to their practical acquaintance with several languages, they are usually fond of, and keep pace with, the literature of foreign countries. Domesticity is a great Russian institution : homes are almost invariably happy. Excellent wives and excellent husbands are the rule : everywhere there is a cheerfulness which is very fascinating. The taste—and I must also add, the talent—for music is very general, and there are few more pleasant performances than the Russian native airs played by the ladies. National airs, when distinct from the encroachments of other countries, are always interesting ; and those of which I speak have a peculiar vein of melody very unlike that of any others with which we are better acquainted.

On the evening of the 5th, I was somewhat startled and annoyed, by being informed that orders had been received that we were to be compelled to travel home *viâ* Odessa. There were many reasons why this would have been unpleasant to us, and we determined to try hard for Moscow and St. Petersburg. At present poor Thompson was too ill to move; but the doctor guaranteed his being sufficiently well to accompany me in a week. I therefore gladly made up my mind to wait for him. The Governor kindly used his good offices, and the Northern road was opened to us. The remainder of my few days were passed in a series of visits, dinners, balls, musical soirées, and lastly a real Russian wedding, being the very first I had witnessed. By the 12th I had succeeded in completing a series of most warm and heartfelt farewells, and on the 13th I was again *en route*.

Our friend Mr. Abukoff insisted, as a last act of many kindnesses, on our travelling in one of his carriages as far as Moscow. Attentions did not cease here, for many of our friends came and absolutely insisted on packing our luggage on to the fourgon which we had purchased. Moreover, two of our friends insisted on accompanying us to the first station, a distance of twenty-two versts or so, Schaller and Kadri occupying the

fourgon with the luggage. When the moment of our departure arrived, there were but few dry eyes, and we left, laden with presents of all kinds, souvenirs of the best and kindest of friends. Among them I shall ever think with the liveliest gratitude of the numberless attentions I received at the hands of his Excellency the Governor, Pantzoulidzeff, and his amiable family, and at those of my good friends the Zagoskines, Saloffs, and Saburoffs.

We passed through Saransk, a large town about 130 versts from Penza, remarkable for nothing but the multiplicity of its churches. The roadside and the country was very pretty, dotted here and there with country seats and cheerful post-houses. At one of the latter, by the way, I purchased some Berlin wool-work, &c., made by the Postmaster's wife; it was nothing remarkable, but simply a curiosity, coming from so unknown a region. With such amusing attempts to vary the monotony, did we proceed until 6 P.M., on the 16th, when we arrived at the celebrated Nijni - Novgorod, so famous throughout the civilised globe for its annual fair, at which people of every country assemble; English, and French, of course, with the more startling additions of Greeks and Turks, Tartars and Chinese.

All these various people, like young ladies on visits, "bring their work," and thus there is the

strangest medley of men, manners, and merchandise, which it is possible to conceive. The Great Exhibition of 1851, presided over by the builders of the Tower of Babel, would be, perhaps, the nearest approach. Nijni is properly two towns, a new and an old one. The Nijni of a few years since was built, if I may so express it, on the wrong part of the mountain on which it stands, and gains no advantage from the neighbouring confluence of the Oka and the Volga. That so fine a situation might not be lost, the Emperor Nicholas had the new town laid out, with spacious quays, on the right bank of the Oka, and under the hill. The new town spread with great rapidity, and speedily distanced its elder brother in the race for population and wealth. The fair is held opposite the new town, on the left side of the Oka; it occupies a curious triangular piece of ground between the two rivers. The situation of the old town is also very fine, but more picturesque than profitable. It is built on the side of the mountain, with admirable shelter, and a magnificent prospect over an immense plain, spreading all around the new town, down to the rivers and the fair. But it misses, of course, all that capacity for commerce which a river gives, and therefore the new town takes the lead. And then the new town was the pet of the late Emperor, and it must be a very vicious and ill-conditioned city

that will not flourish under Imperial auspices. However, the idea of Nicholas was, practically, an extension rather than an alteration of site. The Kremlin is a magnificent building; its towers and ramparts, its battlements and pinnacles, and fretted minarets, attract the traveller from afar off, by the immensity of the edifice and the grotesqueness of the architecture. Encircling a lofty mountain, the walls are solidly built into nature herself. Horrible precipices have become impregnable walls; caverns have been manipulated into arcades; and gentle slopes have easily taken the form of staircases, leading from terrace to terrace of gorgeous masonry and adornment. The town, although containing (excepting during the three months' fair) but very few permanent inhabitants, is not altogether without a certain wealthy fashion and appearance. I saw many splendid equipages and equally splendid owners; but being desirous of getting over the ground we made no stay. I had letters of introduction to the governor; but, for the reasons I have stated, I contented myself with merely leaving them, and seeking no personal interview. Our few hours' stay was sufficient for us only to view the more prominent things; to make up our minds that Nijni was neither more nor less than patches of the west end of London put together skilfully; and that hotel-keepers in Russia are no more exempt

from the charge of extortion than are their fellow plunderers here or elsewhere.

We had only reached the first village on leaving Nijni, when the usual calamities occurred. The road was in excellent condition, only utterly useless, because the very long bridge over the very broad river was broken down. We found shelter, however, at the house of a peasant, a very fair specimen of his class—clean, comfortable and happy; remarkably ignorant, and deferential towards his superiors; which word, in the opinion of a Russian peasant, takes in all the world excepting himself. Humility and a taste for music are the chief characteristics of the serfs.

Getting, at last, over our bridge difficulty, we pursued our journey through a lovely country, richly cultivated. Numerous villages we saw merely in passing. The houses appeared to be neatly and comfortably constructed of wood; logs, not planks, carefully “dove-tailed” at the corners. We had the good fortune to see the festivities on a Sunday. All the villagers turn out in their very best; the women in gay petticoats, and velvet jackets, or *paletôts*, with a red handkerchief round the head, and nothing on the feet. The men’s costume is simpler, consisting of a blouse and blue trousers, and a most singularly tall, black, and almost brimless hat. The amusements on these occasions are of the simplest

kind. Seeing, and being seen, in holiday attire, and with nothing to do, is quite sufficient to raise the spirits of a race, who are not the most deliriously lively on this earth.

Thus, with opportunities to observe only what lay on the surface, as we hurried along, did we reach Vladimir, early one morning. The gay inhabitants were dashing about for their riding or walking exercise, as we once more faced the dreary hospitality of an hotel.

CHAPTER IX.

Moscow—Mademoiselle Mouravieff—Marriage ceremony.

Nothing could have been more hospitable than our reception by the Russian Government at Moscow. A splendid suite of apartments were placed at our disposal in the Hotel Chevallier; and the liberality, which had been hitherto extended to us, was in no way withdrawn.

As the Emperor was *en route* to Warsaw, we were not introduced to him, as our chief and comrades had been. We had been in hopes that, on arriving here, we should find them; but they had left only a few days before for St. Petersburg, intending to return by way of Berlin and Paris. A choice of this route was granted to us; but we thought that we should more speedily reach England by way of Copenhagen. Our sojourn at Moscow was of short duration; and the city has been so frequently, before this, described by former travellers, that I shall say but little on the subject.

All who have read recent works on Russia must know, that while St. Petersburg is the residence of the Court, Moscow is the national city and real

capital. Its houses are not built in close contiguity to one another as in London and Paris, and other cities, but stand apart, mostly surrounded by trees, which give it a most picturesque effect. Then after gazing on the golden cupolas of the churches, and passing amid the cool and verdant gardens interspersed amid the public buildings, you may walk

“Over the Kremlin’s pavement bright
With serpentine and syenite,”

as Browning sings in his Dramatic Lyrics.

I was much interested in the temple of St. Sauveur which was being erected. Round it are groups of figures, twice as large as life, in *alto relievo*, cut in hard white stone, and attached to the walls by iron hooks. These figures represent Scriptural events,—such as “David’s Victory over Goliath,” in which the faces struck me as very beautiful. Before these figures were finished the artist died; but, as little remains to be finished, the original design cannot be much interfered with.

I was much delighted with the Institute for Orphans and *Enfants Trouvés*,—certainly one of the finest buildings I have ever seen. We visited it in company with Madame De Metz, who is the Directress, and much beloved by the young girls, and with Madame de Belolubsky, a very interesting, clever woman. We saw all the children

and young ladies. This noble charity is under government patronage; and, besides providing for *enfants trouvés*, offers an asylum to the orphans of officers.

Each infant has a nurse, and a certain number are accommodated in a room airy and capacious. Each nurse has a bed, and a little cradle by its side, all exquisitely clean, and the washing department in each room is perfect. The elder girls are divided into classes, and are dressed in green gowns with white jackets. I saw them all at mass in a beautiful chapel, which was highly decorated with marble pillars, and in very good taste. We afterwards watched them at dinner, a most excellent repast, consisting of soup, meat, and pudding, all of which I tasted. They speak French and German, and are taught drawing, music, &c. In short, they receive a first-rate education to qualify them for the situation of governess, in which capacity they leave on attaining the age of twenty. I heard them play and sing, and repeat poetry in different languages. The drawing-hall was hung round with the performances of the young ladies.

The Directress, in the kindest manner, begged that I would select a drawing, and accept it as a souvenir of the Institution. I took one in water-colours, beautifully executed, which I value highly. There

is also a room for gymnastics, and in short there did not seem to be any thing wanting, either for their instruction or comfort. There were in the building at the time I saw it 900 *enfants trouvés* and 730 orphans of officers; besides this number there are many in the country at nurse, the whole amounting to 4217.

Whilst I was at Moscow the niece of General Mouravieff, of Kars celebrity, a very clever and accomplished girl, was married. I was asked to the wedding, to which I accordingly went, and very much interested I was.

The bridegroom was an officer of hussars, named Shêrmetieff, a relative of one of General Mouravieff's aide-de-camps of the same name, whom we knew in the Russian camp. Among the bridesmaids was Mademoiselle Shêrmetieff, sister of our friend, a very handsome and delightful person, speaking English fluently. The wedding took place at 9 P.M., in a private and remarkably pretty chapel. It was a magnificent affair, and the building was filled with persons of both sexes splendidly attired. The ceremony is very imposing, and without attempting any elaborate description, I shall try to give some faint idea of it.

Before going to the church I was present at the house of the bride's father, and witnessed the ceremony of the parents blessing their child.

The bride is attended, as in England, by a certain number of bridesmaids, all dressed in white, she herself being in a similar dress, with a wreath of orange-blossoms on her head. The bridegroom is attended by four *garçons de nocés*, and is dressed according to his taste. In the present instance he wore the uniform of his regiment. At 5 P.M. they entered the church, and the couple stood in front of the altar, on a piece of rose-coloured muslin, which was spread on the ground by the *garçons*. Two priests then appeared, and the ceremony commenced with chanting. This, however, is only the civil part, if it may be so termed, of the contract; the religious part, as I understand it, consists of a very few words. The priest asks the man if he is willing to take the woman "for better or for worse," and he replies in the affirmative. The same question is put to the woman. They are then respectively asked if they have plighted their troth to any other, and, on their answering in the negative, they are pronounced to be man and wife. All that precedes and follows this part of the ceremony seems to be a matter of form. After replying to the two questions, I forgot to say, they each kiss the cross which is presented to them and held to their lips by the priest. Previous to this, a gold crown, decorated with roses, is placed on the heads of each of the contracting parties: a ring is then

given to each, which they exchange with each other three times before finally placing them on the fingers. After this a cup of wine is blessed by the priest, and given to the man and woman, who drink of it three times alternately ; the priest pronouncing a prayer all the time.

This is intended to show that the parties consent to live together for the rest of their lives, by drinking out of the same cup. As soon as this has been gone through, solemn chanting having been carried on all the time, the priest joins their hands, and holding them in one of his own, he leads the couple round the church three times, tarrying at the altar for a short time between each promenade.

This is to show them to the world as man and wife. After this, sundry kisses take place between the bride and her relatives. The bridesmaids then go away, and all the actors, except the principals and the *garçons*, to prepare the house for the reception of the newly married pair, who themselves approach the altar, and listen to a long exhortation from the priest. This being concluded, the party retire in carriages-and-four to the house of the bridegroom, where they indulge in dinner, tea, or supper, according to circumstances ; dancing then takes place, and at a reasonable hour they all retire, except the bridesmaids and the *garçons*.

After spending a most delightful evening I left, laden with flowers and bonbons, as the custom is on such occasions.

We now proceeded to St. Petersburg, where, by the courtesy of the officials, I visited all the Public Institutions. They have been so frequently described that I will not again traverse so beaten a track.

Our voyage to Hull was uneventful. Our kind and enthusiastic reception by the warm-hearted citizens of that place was made sufficiently public by the English newspapers.

I pen my last sentence with a sad remembrance of my spirited and promising young companion-in-arms. When we hurried on rejoicingly together to greet relatives and friends in London, from whom we had so long been parted, I little thought how soon his comrades would stand sorrowing around his early grave.

LETTERS REFERRED TO IN THE
PREFACE.

“TIFLIS, *June 3rd*, 1856.

“DEAR GENERAL WILLIAMS,

“I had the pleasure of receiving your friendly letter dated 17th May, and was very glad to hear of your safe arrival at St. Petersburg. However happy may have been your travel through Russia, which I sincerely rejoice at, so long a journey is never deprived of fatigue and many privations, unavoidable even for a man so accustomed to travelling as you are; it was therefore very satisfactory for me to hear you safe at the term of your voyage.

“I could not doubt a moment of the distinguished reception you were sure to meet from our Emperor; your character and your renown could not but be honoured by a sovereign who esteems real merit in friend and foe. For my part, although I cannot but refuse to accept the terms of generosity and humanity, which you apply to my conduct towards yourself and your countrymen, whom I met at Kars, my behaviour was no other than that which every one, at my place, would have held. I hope and feel convinced, that yourself and each of your countrymen were sure to meet with such feelings of regard and esteem towards an adversary who deserved them, as to render any praise,

whether private or public, what may be termed mere courtesy. I shall always be happy to remember the time I passed in your company, and shall be glad if I am found correct in telling you, before your departure from Kars, that whatever might be the fatigues or the accidents of a travel through Russia, I suspected you would carry off to England an agreeable remembrance of your stay in our country.

“I feel very gratified in reading in the newspapers, and in hearing from yourself, that your Queen honours you with a graceful testimonial of her satisfaction. I shall be very glad to receive the photograph of your and your Kars companions’ portraits, which you kindly promise to send me, and hope to receive good news of your arrival in England. I received a few days ago a letter from Colonel Lake, dated Penza, which he appears to have safely reached with Captain Thompson; he writes on the eve of his departure for home: I was likewise happy to hear that he felt satisfied with his travel through Russia, though it may probably have been, owing to the season, still more fatiguing than your own.

“I left my family at the mineral baths of Piatigorsk about a fortnight ago, and will take occasion of the first letter I write to remember you to my wife and daughter. Please to give my best compliments to Teesdale, and believe me to be,

“Dear General Williams,

“Ever most sincerely yours,

“N. MOURAVIEFF.”

“THE RIGHT HON. GEN. WILLIAMS, BART.

&c. &c. &c.”

SHEIKH SHAMIL TO GENERAL SIR FENWICK
WILLIAMS (THEN COLONEL WILLIAMS).

“IN the name of God the merciful and clement.

“From the slave of God, Shemouil, to the illustrious and honourable Colonel Williams, Commissioner in the army of Anatolia. ‘Imperishable may his eminence and dignity be.’

“We received your letter, and understood its purport and meaning. We rejoiced to hear of the successes of our ever-victorious arms over our virtueless enemies, and the prostration of their pride in every engagement that has taken place. May the Lord be praised!

“After that, we thank you for the notice you take of our dignity and honour, and for giving us a place amongst worthy men; and though we may not be that in truth and reality, God forbid that we should do anything which might be considered disgraceful by the Mohammedan laws or by the exalted government. We had liberated the women* (Princess Tchevtchevadze and her companions) before the arrival of your letter, and had you been acquainted with the true circumstances you would not have found fault with us; for everybody knows that

* This singular production may be rendered more intelligible by my here explaining that General Williams had received a semi-official letter from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople requesting him to exercise his influence with Sheik Shamil to procure the release of some Russian ladies who had been carried into captivity by the followers of this wild Prophet Warrior of the Mountains. General Williams therefore immediately urged strongly upon Sheik Shamil the dubious light in which such a proceeding would place his character in civilised Europe. Hence this reply.
—A. L.

we are always humane; that we expend our breath in reciting the holy words of the Lord of the Creation, and scorn the enmity of the infidels our foes. Our great solicitude and prayer to the Almighty is the pleasure of making your acquaintance, and we never had that opportunity until now. It may be that God the all-gracious will grant us this favour.

“(Sealed) SHEMOUIL.”

“*Friday, the 12th of the month of Redjeb, 1271.*”

GENERAL MOURAVIEFF'S LETTER TO COLONEL LAKE.

“TIFFLIS, *June 7th, 1856.*”

“DEAR SIR,

“I had the pleasure of receiving your letter dated Penza, 3rd May, and was happy to hear you safely arrived at that place and in way to return to England; I feel satisfied in hearing from yourself that you achieved the difficult Journey without particular accident; though I cannot but suspect that fatigue and deprivances could not be quite avoided, owing as well to cold season as to great distance. The attention which you mention was paid to you, during your stay in Russia, was no other than the regard which in our country, as well as elsewhere, is paid to a foreigner and to a respected officer. I therefore cannot accept the terms of thankfulness with which you honour me, on this occasion. Myself and all my countrymen were glad to mark our esteem to your character and your abilities, and in whatever circumstances you may still meet them, you will certainly encounter the same feelings, which met you now. For

my own part, as the nearest witness of your engineer's skill, during the last campaign, I felt happy, during your stay at Tifflis, to give you every proof of my best regard, and shall keep an agreeable remembrance of my acquaintance with you.

“ Wishing you may soon and safely reach your country, I beg you to give my best compliments to Captain Thompson and to believe me

“ Dear Sir

“ Ever sincerely yours

“ N. MOURAVIEFF.” *

“ To ATWELL LAKE, ESQ.,

“ LIEUTENANT-COLONEL OF MADRAS ENGINEERS.”

* This letter I have given in the precise words of the writer.

APPENDIX.

TIFLIS.

BEFORE the Russian invasion of the Caucasus, Tiflis was a completely Oriental, or rather Asiatic, town. Situate in the heart of a magnificent, but almost inaccessible, mountain region, and undergoing little change from the arrivals and departures of its transitory commercial population, it presented a striking, though not very attractive spectacle to the European traveller. It was founded in the year 1063, and for seven hundred years probably little variation had taken place in its external characteristics. The dark and gloomy mountains on a spur of which it was placed,—the sombre tint of the buildings, which seemed to repeat the savage hues of the scenery around them,—the low dwellings, constructed of dun-coloured brick, mingled with stones and mud, whose flat roofs were unbroken by graceful dome or soaring minaret,—offered to the western pilgrim no realisation of the elegant architecture which he was wont to associate with the idea of an oriental city. He found himself in the midst of Asiatic dirt and barbarism, among habitations apparently more fit for the Troglodytes of old than for creatures like himself; among houses with narrow doors, and small windows, generally covered with

paper, not even made transparent by a covering of oil, and seldom adorned with the almost unattainable luxury of glass. The heavy rain speedily soaked through the earthen roofs, and converted the whole dwelling into a mass of tenacious mud, filled with a compressed mass of squalid human beings, who enjoyed, in common with their domestic animals, a shelter only to be paralleled in the most uncivilised dens of Connemara or Tipperary. Dirt and discomfort surrounded the traveller on every side; nor were his impressions of the state of civilisation likely to be improved if the fancy took him to enter the baths which the hot springs of Tiflis made a place of frequent and favourite resort. These places, filled with water possessing at its source the temperature of forty-two degrees of Reaumur, and from fifteen to thirty-six degrees in the baths themselves, afforded a sight in some degree resembling that which may be witnessed at the baths of Leuk in Switzerland at the present day. At the latter spot immersion is, indeed, enjoyed by both sexes in common; but all the bathers are clad in long gowns which effectually cover them, and decorum is observed with complete strictness.

The Turkish bath has been so often described, that if the process pursued at Tiflis exactly resembled it, I should not think of enlarging on the subject. Bathing at Tiflis, however, is a much less elaborate process than at Constantinople. The building is composed of dressing-rooms and bath-rooms arranged round a quadrangle. In one of these you undress. In the next, you find a couple of hot baths, and a small wooden platform: on this you stand, while the attendant covers you with hot, snowy lather squeezed from a muslin bag, and rubs it well into your hair and your whole body. When you are tolerably saturated, you insert your person, with due deliberation (for it is *very* hot), into one of the baths, where in a

short time you become nearly parboiled. When you come out, you go into the other room, dry yourself, and put on your clothes. Some Russians add to the hot bath a plunge into a cold one, but I did not feel inclined to try the experiment. When I was in the Russian camp at Kars, after the capitulation, the soldiers had a place fitted up for hot baths, after making use of which they rushed out, naked, and plunged into the river through holes cut in the ice.

The appearance of the city has undergone a transformation quite as complete as the manners of the inhabitants, and the influence of Russia is equally visible in the architecture, the primitive character of which is much altered.

Like Edinburgh, Tiflis is now divided into an "old" and "new" town; the former preserving all the rough aspects of eastern barbarism,—the caravanserais and bazaars, the streets of open shops all devoted to one trade, the mixture of population and variety of picturesque costumes, of Tatars, Persians, Koords, and Circassians; the latter exhibiting all the outward features of western refinement,—modern houses, well-supplied shops, cafés, government buildings, French broadcloth, and Russian uniforms; the whole crowned by the cupolas or towers of numerous edifices, dedicated to seven different varieties of religious faith.

The best account of Tiflis with which I am acquainted, as regards former times, is to be found in Sir R. Ker Porter's *Travels*, which are well known, and in the *Letters from the Caucasus* of Madame Freygau, a Russian lady, whose observations, though considerably abridged by the rigorous season of the year at which she travelled, and her anxiety regarding the safety of her husband and children, depict most forcibly the frightful difficulties of a journey at that time, partly from the natural perils of

the mountains and the snow, and not less from the lawless state of the population, which required occasionally to be overawed by an escort of a few pieces of cannon. Her course lay from north to south, along the same route through which we proceeded, but in the opposite direction. Nothing can be more dismal than her description of the small Russian redoubts erected at commanding points in those inhospitable wilds, and doubly exposed to the inclemency of the weather and the fierce assaults of the savage Caucasian tribes.

Tiflis and the adjoining districts, as they appear at present, have been well described in the *Transcaucasia* of Baron Haxthausen, in which much information will be found which my position necessarily rendered me unable to collect, and to which I beg to refer those of my readers whom my remarks may incline to a further search.

Sir R. K. Porter remarks the similarity between the dress of a Circassian warrior of the higher class, and an English baron of the reign of King John. We also are recalled to mediæval times by one of the institutions of Georgia, which is found most prominent at Tiflis. I allude to the system of guilds which were formerly so common in our own country and in Germany. Every trade has its head master, and an assembly, who on the receipt of a sum of money present the candidate with the freedom of their company and register his name. They decide all disputes, fix the *lowest* prices for goods, and settle all matters which do not belong to criminal jurisdiction. For further information, see *Transcaucasia*, chapter iv.

THE CAUCASUS.

THE Caucasus, extending over nearly the whole of the Isthmus which lies between the Black and the Caspian Seas, naturally divides itself into two ranges; the northern of which extends from a point near the river Kouba, on the north-east of the Euxine, to the promontory of Aphseron, on the western coast of the Caspian; while the southern portion, exhibiting a far less definite and regular series of mountains, is broken up into various ranges from Trebizond on the east, comprehending Ararat and the Armenian highlands, till it loses itself in the outlying spurs of the great Himalayan chain. The regions included by it comprise almost every form of the earth's surface, from the unwholesome marshes of Imeritia to the bleak and snowy summits of Elbruz or Kasbek; and every kind of climate, under the varieties of which flourish in unusual abundance numerous kinds of fruits, vegetables, and forest-trees. The traveller who has been charmed or astonished by the secluded valleys or romantic precipices of Switzerland, would view with increased admiration and awe the sublime scenery of the Caucasus, where more headlong streams, the offspring of mightier winters, check his adventurous course; where vaster avalanches falling from higher precipices spread wider desolation, and more elevated summits cast more extensive shadows under the declining sun.

We cannot wonder at the ambition which Russia has felt to secure so fertile and beautiful a territory; nor, on the other hand, at the efforts which its inhabitants have made to retain it. Since the treaty of Adrianople in 1829, at which time the Caucasian provinces were ceded to Russia by Turkey, the dominion of the former has made little real progress. The large towns indeed, and

the plains which surround them, are in Muscovite hands; but the tribes which have retreated into the inaccessible fastnesses of their mountains would immediately repossess themselves of the whole country if the forces of the Czar were withdrawn. The progress of the Russian arms has been in some degree aided by their obedience to the precept which teaches a conqueror to divide and govern; but as the numerous tribes of the Caucasus have been from time immemorial in a state of mutual warfare, the dissensions which have been fomented by Russian influence have not rendered them much less able to repel, or at least to harass, the common invader. Schamyl, the head of the Lesghian tribe, has perhaps been most active in checking the advance of the northern armies; his exploits recal those of some Homeric or mediæval hero; and indeed the state of society, if society it can be called, which now prevails in Caucasia, is not unlike that to which our own feudal ancestors belonged. But the "Prophet Warrior," as he is called, though far from being a myth as is sometimes supposed, is yet so obscure a personage, whether as regards his policy or his actions, that it would be premature to say much about him, in the absence of more accurate information.

The following is a succinct view of the provinces, capitals, and governments of the Russo-Caucasian territory:—

<i>Provinces.</i>	<i>Capitals.</i>	<i>Government.</i>
I. Cis-Caucasia	Stavropol	1. Stavropol.
		2. Kutais.
		3. Tiflis.
II. Trans-Caucasia	Tiflis	4. Schemaka.
		5. Derbend.

Each government is divided into several "Circles,"

and each circle into "Districts," which are governed in the same manner as those divisions in the rest of Russia.

Probably no country of similar size comprehends so great a variety of different peoples as the Caucasus. Every Asiatic and some European races seem to have passed over this tract, and to have left there some trace of their passage. The following list will give a general idea of the inhabitants, considered in an ethnographical point of view:—

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| 1. Tatar Stock (Karakhai and
"Black Circassians," near
the Elbruz) | 3. Georgian Stock. |
| 2. Caucasian : | 4. Armenian Stock. |
| <i>a.</i> Tcherkesses. | 5. Persian. |
| Kabardians. | 6. Koords. |
| Tchesintzi. | 7. Shirvans. |
| <i>b.</i> Abasians. | 8. Russians. |
| <i>c.</i> Ossetes. | 9. Greeks. |
| <i>d.</i> Tschetses. | 10. Germans. |
| <i>e.</i> Lesghians. | 11. Jews. |
| | 12. Zigeuner. |
| | 13. Kalmucks. |

The following extract from the letters of Madame Freygau, before referred to, will still give a tolerably correct idea of the less civilised inhabitants of the Caucasus:—

"It is said that the Caucasus is inhabited by near a million of men fit to bear arms; making an immense population when you superadd the aged, the women and children. These people form many tribes, speaking divers languages, and their manners are distinct; but their general character is bravery, a spirit of independence, a passion for arms, and a thirst for plunder; indeed, in that respect they are mere savages. The necessity of being constantly on their guard has confirmed their natural inclination for warfare; they attack with fury

and take the cruellest revenge. They are naturally indolent; plundering is their favourite pursuit, and often their only resource for subsistence. So vindictive is the Caucasus highlander, that if prevented in gratifying his revenge while alive, he will bequeath it to his children. Early seduced by hope of gain, he follows his chief at the first call, and will with him brave every danger; but as soon as he perceives that there is no chance of advantage, he is as prompt to desert as he had been before to join his leader. Ever roving about and holding his life by a tenure so uncertain, he is unacquainted with and therefore cannot appreciate the happiness of domestic repose. Independent in heart as in mind, even love fails in uniting him to his wife and children; he looks upon them as his flocks, to be mere property; showing himself a stranger, not only to law and religion, but seeming to disown even the dictates of nature. So, when old age obliges him to lay aside his arms, the eldest son replaces his father; and from that time the old man, ceasing to be the principal character, retires to the gloomiest corner of the house, where, unattended by the respect or affection of any one, he awaits his death with a stoicism worthy the school of Zeno.

“They reckon five distinct epochs at which the population of Caucasus has been augmented by new hordes. The Lesgees, the Ghysors, or Ghasrazes, the Moguls, the Arabs, and the Tatars, conducted by Zenghis Khan, Timour-lung and Batis, have successively contributed to the peopling of this region.

“All the natives of Caucasus are either Mahometans or Idolaters; there are very few Christians among them. Tamara, Princess of Georgia, introduced Christianity among the greater part of these tribes; but for ages it has been displaced by Mahometanism. The ruins of churches built by Tamara are however still seen: they

have preserved some remains of Christianity in observing Lent with considerable strictness, and hold the feast of Easter so sacred that at that time the prosecution of revenge is suspended.

“The Tchetchinzi are masters in the art of robbery, in the pursuit of which they show no pity even for their countrymen. If a Tchetchinz get the better of another in single combat, the victor will strip and put him to death; but if one of these people seize an European, he will plunder his prisoner, yet preserve his life, in hope of ransom. Notwithstanding such a continual system of pillage, the very profession of a Tchetchinz, his dwelling is a mere den, destitute of every convenience; his bed, a skin placed by the hearth; his food, coarse bread, half-baked, which he eats in a smoking state with half-roasted meat: these, with ardent spirits, of which they are particularly fond, are their luxuries. As long as the pilfered provisions last, the wretch remains idle, and want alone drives him to active exertion in search of more.

“The Tchetchinzi do not take much trouble about agriculture; they cultivate only a little barley and wheat, with some tobacco and onions. The women perform all the domestic offices, while the men give themselves no care but in the chase and robbery. They are of a middling height and very hardy. When influenced by fear or mistrust, they can be obliging, and are particularly so to the rich, or to strangers, in hope of some profit.

“Their arms consist of a matchlock, a sabre, and a dagger; sometimes also they carry a lance with a shield. The Tchetchinz never goes out of his house without being armed, if only with a stick, at the end of which is fixed a ball of iron having three triangular points; this murderous weapon they call a *toppus*.

“The OSSITINIANS differ little from the Tchetchinzi;

they use bows and arrows,' although their usual arm is a matchlock. They are great boasters and quarrelers, threatening each other continually, either with a gun, a dagger, or the bow; usually, however, they content themselves by making a great uproar, and if any third person will celebrate the reconciliation with a glass of brandy, or a draught of their strong country beer, are quickly friends again. Their houses are for the most part enclosed by a wall and paling, surmounted with horses' heads and other bones.

"Upon the death of an Ossitinian, his widow shrieks, tears her hair and face, and beats her bosom, but frequently this despair is only occasioned by the impossibility of her ever marrying again. She pretends at every moment to be ready to kill herself with a knife or a stone, to drown herself, or to cast herself from the top of some rock; but is as invariably withheld by her neighbours, who never leave her during the three days of mourning. These friends employ the next three days in administering consolation to the widow, and eating and drinking at her expense; while the conversation consists of praises of the deceased, who is usually soon after forgotten.

"The ruins of churches built by the Princess Tamara, which were forsaken upon the introduction of Mahometanism, are also seen upon the heights in the Ossitinian country. This tribe have a no less vindictive spirit than the other natives of Caucasus; the effects of their cruel disposition may be stayed by dint of presents, but one is continually threatened. He who is eager to be revenged watches for the moment when, in the company of his destined victim, he may plunge a dagger in the heart of his enemy; but the man thus devoted to destruction is ever upon his guard: these two will, however, associate to all appearance amicably. Twenty years often elapse

before revenge can be satisfied ; and should he who has been doomed to fall by the hand of an insulted man, chance to die, the vengeance is transferred to the son or nearest relation of the offended. I have been furnished with an example of this blood-thirsty passion. One Ossitinian killed another, whose eldest son killed the murderer of his father ; having thus gratified his revenge, the latter murderer took into his house the son of his recent victim. The child, then five years old, was educated as his own ; but, being grown up to manhood, this young person stifled every feeling of gratitude, that he might think only of revenge, let what would be the consequence.

“The mountains of Daghistan are inhabited by the Tawlingi and Lesgees, whose retreats are inaccessible ; and these, like the Tagaourzi and Ingushis, live in a complete state of independence. The inhabitants both of Great and Little Kabarda are the same loose disciples of Mahomet as the other tribes. They live along the banks of several rivers, and are governed by their own chiefs. They use fire-arms, but the sabre is their principal weapon, and many among them wear coats of mail. From their infancy they are inured to the use of arms, and to manage their excellent horses. Their plan in combat is to fire but once, and then to fall upon the enemy with their swords. Their leaders are called upon to distinguish themselves by valour, and to be foremost in every danger.”

THE PASS OF DARIEL.

The pass of Dariel, or Derial, is one of the most interesting and sublime localities of the Caucasus. The name is derived from “Der,” which signifies “a gate,” and the same root may be traced in the name “Derbend.”

Its importance is great in a strategical as well as in other points of view, being one of the only two passes by which the Russian force can penetrate the fertile recesses of Armenia, or threaten, however distantly, the plains of Mesopotamia, and the commerce of the Persian Gulf. The other pass is at Derbend, at the point where the south-eastern shoulder of the Caucasus abuts upon the Caspian Sea. The pass of Dariel, like most similar places, consists of two valleys running up in opposite directions into the heart of the mountains, and respectively watered by the two rivers, the Terek and the Kur, which take their source in the *col*, or depression in the centre; and flow, the one towards the steppes of Russia to swell the Caspian, the other to increase the volume of streams, near Tiflis. The valley of the Terek was anciently denominated *Porta Caucasica*, and is thus described by Pliny (book vi. c. xi.) :—"Ab his sunt *Portæ Caucasicae*, magno errore multis *Caspia* dictæ, ingens naturæ opus montibus interruptis repente: ubi fores obditæ ferratis trabibus, subter medias amne diri odoris fluente; citraque in rupe castello (quod vocatur *Cumania*) communito ad arcendas transitu gentes innumeras." I did not find that the Terek was remarkable for any "dirus odor;" this description would apply better to the Kur, which at Tiflis has a greenish colour and a slightly disagreeable smell, owing, probably, to the sulphur with which the ground is impregnated, and which forms the medicinal element in the warm baths. There are, however, chalybeate springs at the top of the pass, forming what may be considered the true source of the Terek (which, of course, receives its principal supply from the snows of the neighbouring heights); and to these Pliny may have alluded.

The first European sovereign whose soldiers passed this defile was Catherine II., whose troops, under the

command of General Todleben, a name even then celebrated for engineering skill, penetrated with immense difficulty into Georgia. Tchitchianoff, in 1804, made, by order of her grandson, the present road to Tiflis.

The pass of Dariel would, doubtless, be most striking, if approached from the north, so as to bring closer into contrast the gloomy grandeur of the mountain road with the fertile valley of Tiflis into which it opens.

Those who have traversed the Splugen at the time when the pass of the Cardinell was the usual route, would form the best idea of the danger and difficulty of the journey. No part of the track, perhaps, is quite so narrow as the Via Mala; but it is more immediately commanded by the summits of the mountains, which do not, so uniformly as in Switzerland, stand on a lofty plateau, but rise immediately from the valleys beneath them. This circumstance renders the road far more liable to falling rocks, which sometimes block it up, or carry it away altogether,—and to avalanches, which are both frequent and destructive. One of these, which occurred in 1817, precipitated a mass of snow four miles in extent and a hundred and eighty-six feet in depth, and for some time dammed the course of the Terek; a lake was, of course, formed on its bursting, and caused a similar catastrophe to that once occasioned by the Drance at Martigny. The track is, therefore, occasionally carried under archways; and, in one place near the station of Dariel on the north side of the *col*, opposite the ruined castle, it runs for a considerable distance through a tunnel cut in the rock, recalling the aspect of those which pierce the cliffs near Dover. The road on the Tiflis side is magnificent and varied enough, and runs round some tremendous precipices; but it is after you have passed the summit that the finest part is to be met with. It here winds along

the side of a chasm 1000 feet in depth, and in places under huge cliffs which cast a shadow even at noon; the height of the mountains opposite the old castle is stated to be about 3700 feet, which would give the pass itself a height of about ten or eleven thousand. On the left of the road soars into the sky, to the height of fourteen thousand feet, the Peak of Kasibek, one of the three highest summits in the Caucasus, and only exceeded by Ararat and Elbruz. Curiously enough, all these form an exception to the usual features of mountain chains, as they do not rise out of the general line of summits, but stand detached from it, in a way which considerably adds to the grandeur of their effect: Mount Elbruz, in particular, may be viewed from the flat plains to the north, at a point where nothing but its snowy top can be seen, all inferior heights being hidden by the intervening ground; just as the solitary cone of Etna is visible at sea, while the rest of the Sicilian highlands are still below the horizon.

When the Russians first conquered (?) the Caucasus they engaged the head of a tribe bordering on the Terek, to protect travellers against the assaults of his own countrymen; it was necessary that he should have a surname (a luxury he did not naturally indulge in), and he chose to call himself by that of the mountain under which he lived. Accordingly he figures in one or two books of travels as *Colonel Kasibek*; as the Scotch would say, "*Colonel Kasibek of that ilk.*"

RUSSIAN INTOXICATION.

"The consumption of brandy is one of the greatest evils, the true plague, of the Russian empire. The government could adopt no more salutary measure than to put it down, but there are great difficulties in the way

of effecting this : the farming of the trade in spirits yields an immense revenue, which cannot be relinquished, and could not be easily raised in any other way. I believe the state of things is not better in those governments which have no crown monopoly. With regard to the passion for drink there are national differences ; the most inveterate tipplers are the White Russians, and they are consequently the most enervated. The Great Russians do not drink constantly, nor daily, and many of them not at all for months, nor will they take brandy even when offered to them ; but times and temptations occur when, if they taste a drop, a perfect rage for it seizes them (*zapoi*): they will then drink continually for days, nay weeks, and squander all they possess to their last farthing. On these occasions arises the great profit of the *Kabak* [revenue] ; for so long as the peasant has still his senses left, he receives pure brandy, but afterwards adulterated stuff is given him, and more is charged for than he has had. The Little Russians drink constantly, daily, but for the most part moderately ; the *zapoi* rarely seizes them, and they do not drink to lose their senses.

“ Three systems prevail in Russia with regard to the distillation of brandy. In Finland, the Baltic provinces, and Little Russia, the right of distilling is given on payment of a duty to the landowners, Cossacks, &c. In Russia Proper it is a monopoly of the crown. The government in the latter farms out the right of distilling and selling the brandy.

“ A shudder comes over the traveller when he perceives these fatal crown *Kabaks*, with the double eagle over them. We passed through an Odnodvortzi village ; the houses and standings were neat, and everything looked substantial ; but our Yemstchik, in answer to our enquiries regarding it, said,—‘ Yes, this was formerly a

rich Odnodvortzi village ; but observe that small house with the eagle over it : it has been built only ten years, and has already swallowed up all the large and rich houses ! ' '—*Haxthausen's Russian Empire*, vol. ii. p. 175.

TAMBOFF.

“ The government of Tamboff contains 24,900 square miles ; of this land there were, according to the general measurement of 1784, in round numbers, 7000 square miles of forest, 2600 of meadow, 450 of pasture, and 1300 of wild steppe ; the remaining 13,550 square miles were arable land, cultivated by 417,782 male souls, the population of the country at that time. There was accordingly rather more than twenty acres of arable land to each soul.

“ At the last revision, of 1834, fifty years later, the number of peasants had more than doubled, being 850,000 males ; but the cultivated land had also increased. A large part of the steppe and forests had been converted into cultivated land, and its present extent is reckoned at 12,000,000 acres, so that, on an average, fourteen acres is reckoned to each soul. Four-fifths of this land belong to the zone of ‘ black earth,’ and is so fertile that in general it requires no manure. It may be calculated that in the three abundant years 1834—1836, between eighty and ninety million quarters of grain were reaped.* If from this quantity is deducted, first, the seed for three years of 8,000,000 acres, 13,500,000 quarters ; secondly, the maintenance of 1,800,000 people of both sexes, 13,500,000 quarters ; thirdly, for brandy distilling, 750,000 quarters ; fourthly,

* The word quarter is here taken as = $5\frac{3}{4}$ bushels.

as fodder for cattle of all kinds, 5,250,000 quarters; fifthly, as stores in the magazines of the communes, 1,000,000 quarters,—these together would amount to 34,000,000 quarters: accordingly there was a surplus in these three harvests of from forty-six to fifty-six million quarters of grain.

“The grain grown here is chiefly sold in St. Petersburg, to which it is transported on the Tzna and Volga, and the system of canals. At the different places where ships are laden on the Tzna, there were, in the year 1834, as many as 465; in 1835, 490; in 1836, 560; in all, 1515 vessels laden with grain. In each vessel there was room for 3000, or, at most, 5000 sacks or quarters: consequently, the quantity of grain conveyed from the government of Tamboff could not exceed 7,500,000 quarters; but it was much less; as a great quantity from the governments of Penza and Saratof was likewise embarked on those places on the Tzna. Reckoning, however, that 7,500,000 quarters of grain are sent from the government of Tamboff by water, that the same quantity is sent by land and sold,—and estimating the loss from vermin and rotting at an equal amount,—there would still remain, in the year 1837, from sixteen to twenty million quarters of grain lying in the government, which were not and could not be sold at the time.”—*Haxthausen's Russian Empire*, i. 387.

Baron Haxthausen proceeds to notice the immense fertility of this district, compared with the number of inhabitants which it supports. There is not only enough to consume and to sell, but a large portion is always stored up against the “tcherni den,” or black day. Such a district could not suffer famine, except from the hitherto unknown occurrence of a dearth several ages in succession. All parts, however, of the Russian empire are not so fortunate; and, although Tamboff might supply many

parts beyond its own territory, the want of sufficient communication sometimes, as in our own Indian possessions, creates fearful misery. One government may suffer all the horrors of famine, while another enjoys abundant and even superfluous sustenance.

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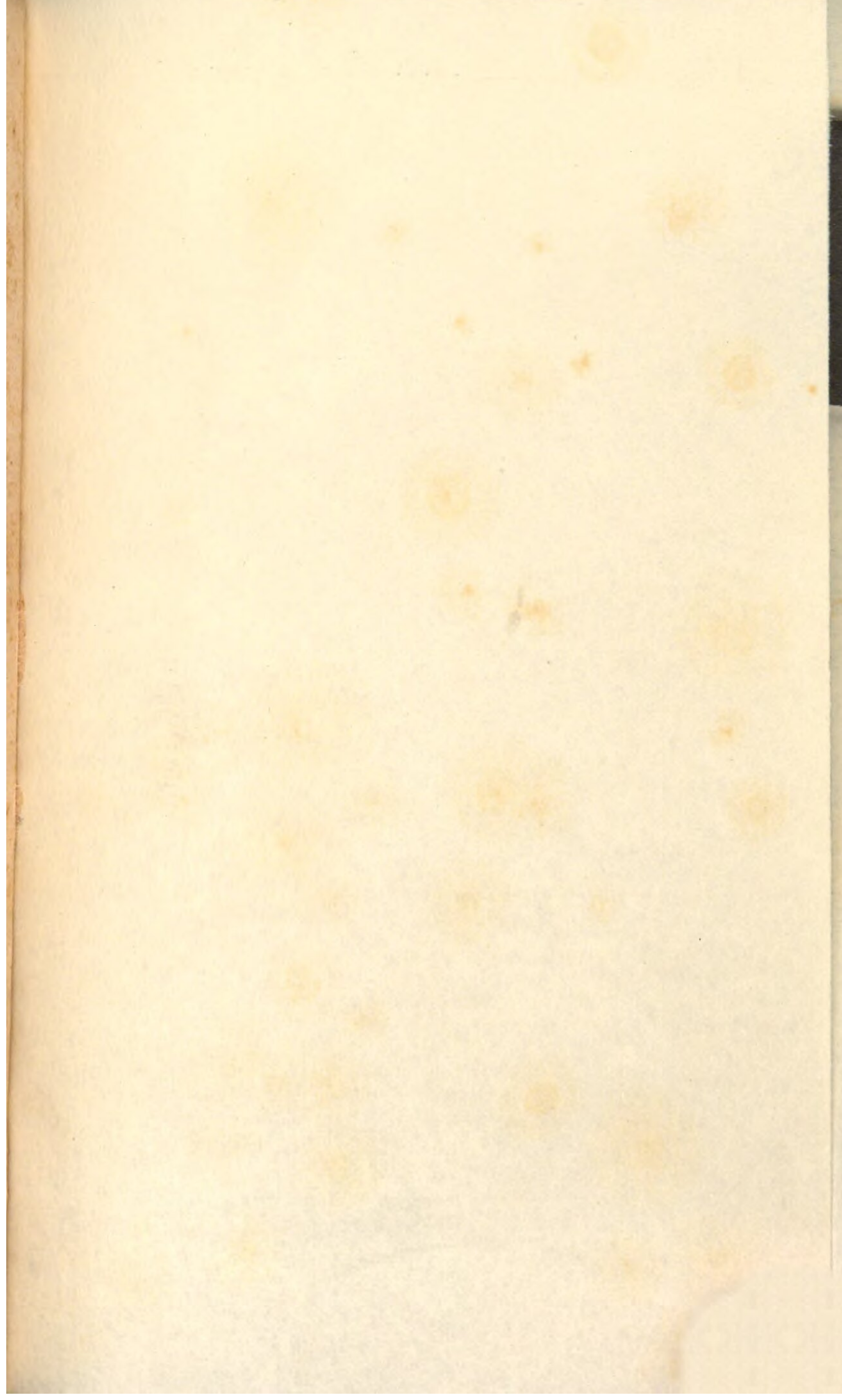
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THE END.



Lake, Atwell

Kars and our captivity in Russia With letters from Sir W. F. Williams,
Bart.; Major Teesdale; and the late Captain Thompson

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